Illustration

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ISSUE NUMBER FOUR
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JESSIE WILCOX SMITH
(1863-1935)
"Checkers"
Oil & Pastel on Board, 24 x 16
Signed, Upper Left

Published in Scribner's magazine, December, 1908 as a Special Christmas Pictoral entitled "A Mother's Days" in full color, page 690.

HARVEY T. DUNN (1884-1952)
"On The Move"
Oil on Canvas, 27 x 40
Signed, Lower Right & Dated 1908

Published in The Saturday Evening Post *as a story illustration.*

W. HERBERT DUNTON
(1878-1936)
"Badger Hole" ("The Spill")
Oil on Canvas, 28 x 20
Signed, Lower Right & Dated, 1908

Published in Cosmopolitan magazine March 1908, page 52, story illustration for "The Lecture in Lady Gay" by Alfred Henry Lewis. Exhibited National Cowboy Hall of Fame Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

FRANK E. SCHOONOVER
(1877-1972)
"Return of Ancient Otter"
Oil on Canvas
Signed & Dated, Lower Right, 1917

Published in American Boy magazine, July 1918 "The White Black Foot" by James Willard Schultz. Exhibited Brandywine River Museum and New Britain Museum.

DEAN CORNWELL (1892-1960)
"Captain Blood Inspecting The Treasure Chest Jewels"
Oil on Canvas, 26 x 52
Signed, Lower Right & Dated, 1930

Published in Cosmopolitan Magazine, July 1930 as a 2-page story illustration for "Ransom - Captain Blood" by Rafael Sabatini. Reproduced in Dean Cornwell - Dean of Illustrators *by Patricia Broder, 1978 Watson-Guptill (also reprinted by Collector's Press, 2001.)*

NORMAN ROCKWELL
(1894-1978)
"Al Smith was Fellowman to Every Man"
Oil on Canvas, 28 x 22
Signed, Lower Right, Circa 1945

Alfred E. Smith & The Children of the World. Published as a unique fund raising poster for The Alfred E. Smith Memorial Hospital Fund, Empire State Building, New York, 1945. Reproduced in Norman Rockwell - A Definitive Catalogue *by Laurie Norton Moffatt, Volume 2, 1986, page 1018, Figure # P157.*

A PRIVATE GALLERY LOCATED IN THE MIAMI—FORT LAUDERDALE METROPOLITAN REGION IS OPEN BY APPOINTMENT.

MAXFIELD PARRISH
(1870-1966)
"Autumn Brook"
Oil on Board, 11 x 9
Signed on verso, Vose Galleries label, Maxfield Parrish Jr. hand-written notes, Circa 1948.

Published as a calendar by Brown & Bigelow, St. Paul, MN. Reproduced as opening plate for Maxfield Parrish chapter in America's Great Illustrators by Susan E. Meyer, pg. 114, Harry N. Abrams, Inc. N.Y., 1978.

JOSEPH C. LEYENDECKER (1874-1961)
"A Proud Sailor's New Uniform"
Oil on Canvas (two sections), 22 x 48

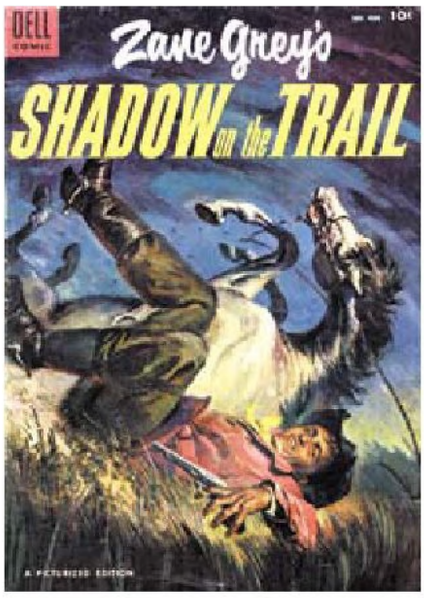
Published in 1917 as a double 2-page ad for House of Kuppenheimer in The Saturday Evening Post *and other national magazines. Reproduced in* J.C. Leyendecker *by Michael Schau, Watson-Guptill, 1974, pages 94-95.*

HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY
(1873-1952)
"After the Storm"
Oil on Canvas
Signed, Lower Left & Dated, 1936

CHARLES G. MARTIGNETTE

P.O. BOX 293, Hallandale Beach, Florida, 33008 USA Telephone: (954) 454-3474

Author of *The Great American Pin-Up* published worldwide by Benedikt Taschen Verlag, October 1996.
Author of *Gil Elvgren - All His Glamorous American Pin-Ups* published by Benedikt Taschen Verlag, December 1999.



Cover illustration by
Sam Savitt
Zane Grey's Shadow on the Trail
Dell Comic #604, 1954
Gouache on Board

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Illustration

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From the Editor

The observant reader will once again notice the unpredictable and ever-changing contents, which seem to evolve randomly from one month to the next. Rather than dispensing with the almost meaningless "Coming Next Issue..." box (as some have angrily suggested) I hope to change my evil ways and actually start including some of the stories that have been advertised in the past (Al Parker, etc.) As you can imagine, assembling some of these features is a monumental and expensive task (photography for transparencies, etc.) so I hope you will understand that I cannot always bring everything together as quickly as I would like, and I hope that you will accept my apologies. All of the stories will appear in print eventually, it's just hard to pin down exactly WHEN. With any luck, the next issue will be another 64 pager, and will contain much more content than this issue. (As well as a letters column, which was dropped from this issue to make room for more great art.)

As always, we need your help with upcoming issues. Many of you have been very generous in offering transparencies, photographs and other information concerning some of the many illustrators we are seeking to cover in the years ahead. I hope that you will continue to get in touch and offer images from your collections for us to use. (4x5 transparencies from original art are in high demand.) We are all grateful for your assistance, and this magazine will suffer without it.

I am looking for any information about the lives and work of the illustrators whose work appeared in the Lionel electric toy train catalogs and advertisements between the 1920s and the 1950s. These artists included: Joseph Adda, Jon Brubaker, Salvatore Castagnola, Fernando Ciavatti, Walter Beach Humphrey, Percy Leason, Meinrad L. Mayer, Neff, Alex Ross, Robert Sherman, Archer St. John, and Raymond Thayer. If you have any information on these artists, please contact me or Roger Carp at *Classic Toy Trains Magazine*, 21027 Crossroads Circle, Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187; phone 262-796-8776 ext. 253; email: rcarp@kalmbach.com.

I hope you enjoy this latest issue!
Dan Zimmer, Editor

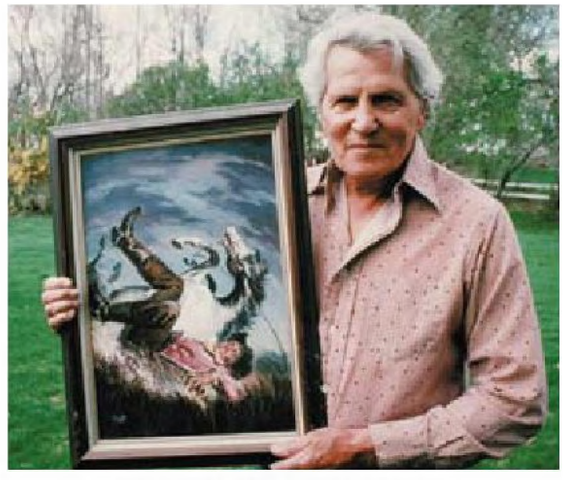
Zane Grey's Shadow on the Trail, FC #604. 1954. Gouache on board.

Sam Savitt

Painter, Author, Teacher, and Horseman

Being at the right place at the right time has an enormous influence on an artist's career, but it isn't everything. Good timing is nothing without passion, drive, and talent to back it up. Such was the case with one of the greatest horse painters this country has ever produced, Sam Savitt. Savitt came along when movie cowboys were the rage, in the 1940s and 1950s. Kids idolized Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, and The Lone Ranger, and after the Saturday matinee picture show, they headed straight for the local drug store to spend what was left of their allowances on comic books that featured their cowboy heroes. Back in those days before computer games, comic books, television, and movies were the major sources of entertainment for kids. The '50s was the "Golden Age" of comics and they sold in the millions.

Often, a cowboy star's horse was bigger in the eyes of many of his fans than the cowboy himself. Merchandisers picked up on this and produced hundreds of horse-related items, including comic books. The contribution Savitt made with his dramatic comic book cover paintings of Trigger, Champion, and Silver is responsible to a large degree for the popularity of the "horse characters" they became.



Sam Savitt in 1996. Photo by Leo Pando.

Savitt's skills in the studio were on par with his skills in the saddle, and that set him apart from the majority of his contemporaries. When a comic cover required a horse, Savitt was the man for the job. His unsurpassed love and knowledge of horses, combined with his artistic talents, would serve him well in a career that extended from the colorful world of comic books and pulps to highly competitive magazine, book, and advertising work and culminated in prestigious gallery and commissioned work.

Early Years, Education, and Influences

Sam Savitt was born and raised in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in 1917. He studied at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, and by the time he graduated in 1941, he was earning a living illustrating pulp magazines. Savitt served in the army in Burma during World War II and rose to the rank of First Lieutenant. After he was discharged from the army in 1946, he married his sweetheart Bette Orkin. In 1956, the couple, their daughter Vicki, and son Roger moved to a beautiful house and property in North Salem, New York.

Savitt enrolled at the Art Student's League in Manhattan in 1951 and studied sculpture at the New School on 12th Street. While attending classes at night, Savitt continued to freelance during the day for national adventure and outdoor magazines. He produced full-color covers and interior illustrations of western scenes with plenty of equestrian action.

From the beginning, Savitt's admiration for horses was fueled by western movies and the books of the legendary cowboy painter and author Will James, which led to his exploration of the Southwest one summer while he was still at Pratt. This experience provided Savitt with the opportunity to use his natural talent as an observer to learn how to ride and train horses of all types and temperament. He became a real "seat of the pants rider," picking up knowledge wherever he could. Over time, his accumulated expertise as a horseman encompassed both English and western riding disciplines. He mastered different aspects of the horse world including the training of hunters and jumpers. He gained a compassion for horses and a deep understanding of horse psychology.

BY LEO PANDO

Sir Lancelot, FC #606. 1954. Gouache on board.

Gene Autry's Champion #5, Feb./Apnl 1952.

Gene Autry and Champion #112, Nov./Dec. 1956.

Gene Autry's Champion #19, Aug./Oct. 1955.

From bucking broncs to thoroughbreds, Savitt's horsemanship and his unique perceptions as an artist gave him the inspirations he would use in paintings throughout his career.

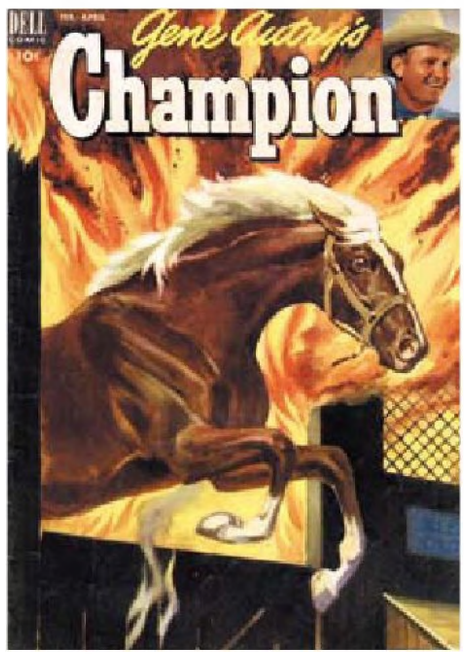
Savitt idolized Harold Von Schmidt (1893-1982) who had earned a reputation for his detailed depictions of the American West. Von Schmidt cofounded the Famous Artists School and was elected to the Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame in 1959. Eventually Savitt studied under Von Schmidt and visited him at his Westport, Connecticut home.

Dell Comic Book Covers

Savitt began his association with the Western Printing and Lithographing Company in 1951 when he was hired to paint a series of Dell Comic book covers beginning with *Gene Autry's Champion*. At the same time, Dell was premiering *The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver* and *Roy Roger's Trigger* comics. Savitt was the natural choice for all three assignments. For comic book fans and horse enthusiasts, Savitt's illustrations would prove to be a match made in heaven. It is no wonder that these dramatic covers are collectors' items today.

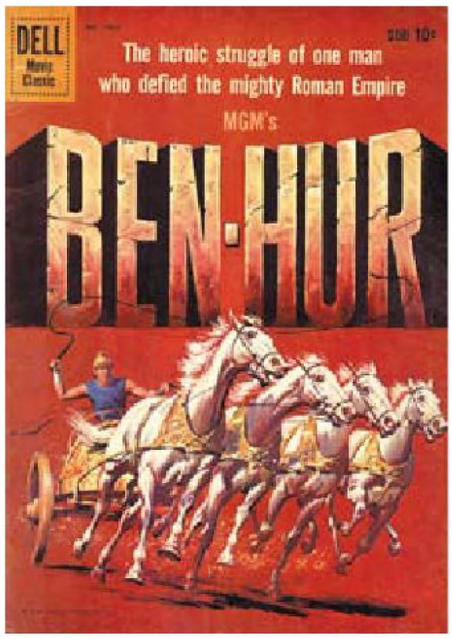
Many an illustrator has been called upon to render horses for Dell Comics; however, Savitt brought a whole other level to his work because he had a deep affection for and a profound understanding of these animals. "I know horses and I just sort of reconstruct them on canvas," he once told me. His strong foundation with horses allowed him, in whatever media he chose, to render them as close to being alive and engaged in action as the laws of physics would allow. Savitt knew how a horse would react physically and psychologically in any situation. With his vast store of knowledge, Savitt could create work in which every detail, from horse to rider to equipment, was accurately depicted. Although Ed Marine, editor at Western Printing, provided Savitt with photo references of the tack used by cowboy stars, Savitt also happened to be working for the Miller Harness Company catalog, rendering equine paraphanalia and illustrating horse motifs on draperies, pillowcases, and calendars.

The editors at Dell knew they could depend on Savitt to create a vibrant cover painting that would feature a horse in a situation pulsating with action. It made no difference that what the subject was doing had little or nothing to do with the interior stories, kids were drawn to the covers and bought the comic books by the truckloads.

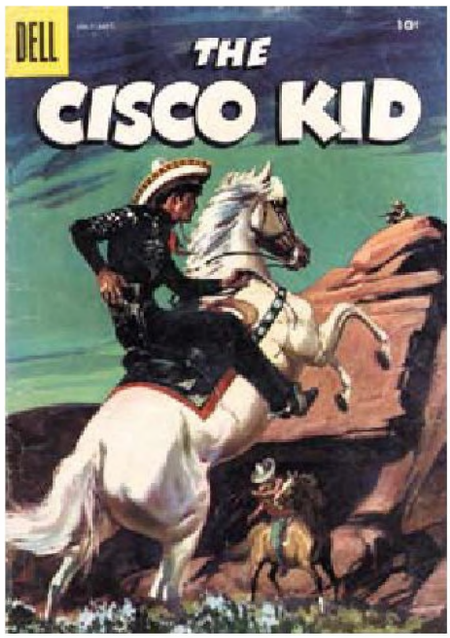


Gene Autry's Champion #9, Feb./Apnl 1953.

Savitt, who always freelanced on his own, never on staff, did two or three painted covers a month simultaneously, averaging 15 a year. He would usually do a pencil sketch to show an editor and had no more than a two-week deadline. "Every week I had to come up with some dramatic situation for the horses to be in," Savitt said. "Sometimes they got pretty farfetched. But the challenge of showing the grace, fire, and spirit in each horse as he battled whatever problem each week, was fun." On occasion, Savitt was also asked to submit an interior cover, illustrating some aspect of horsemanship, or a back cover breed portrait.



Ben-Hur, Dell FC #1052, 1959.



The Cisco Kid, Dell FC #32, July/Sept. 1956.

Gypsy Colt, Dell FC #568, 1954.

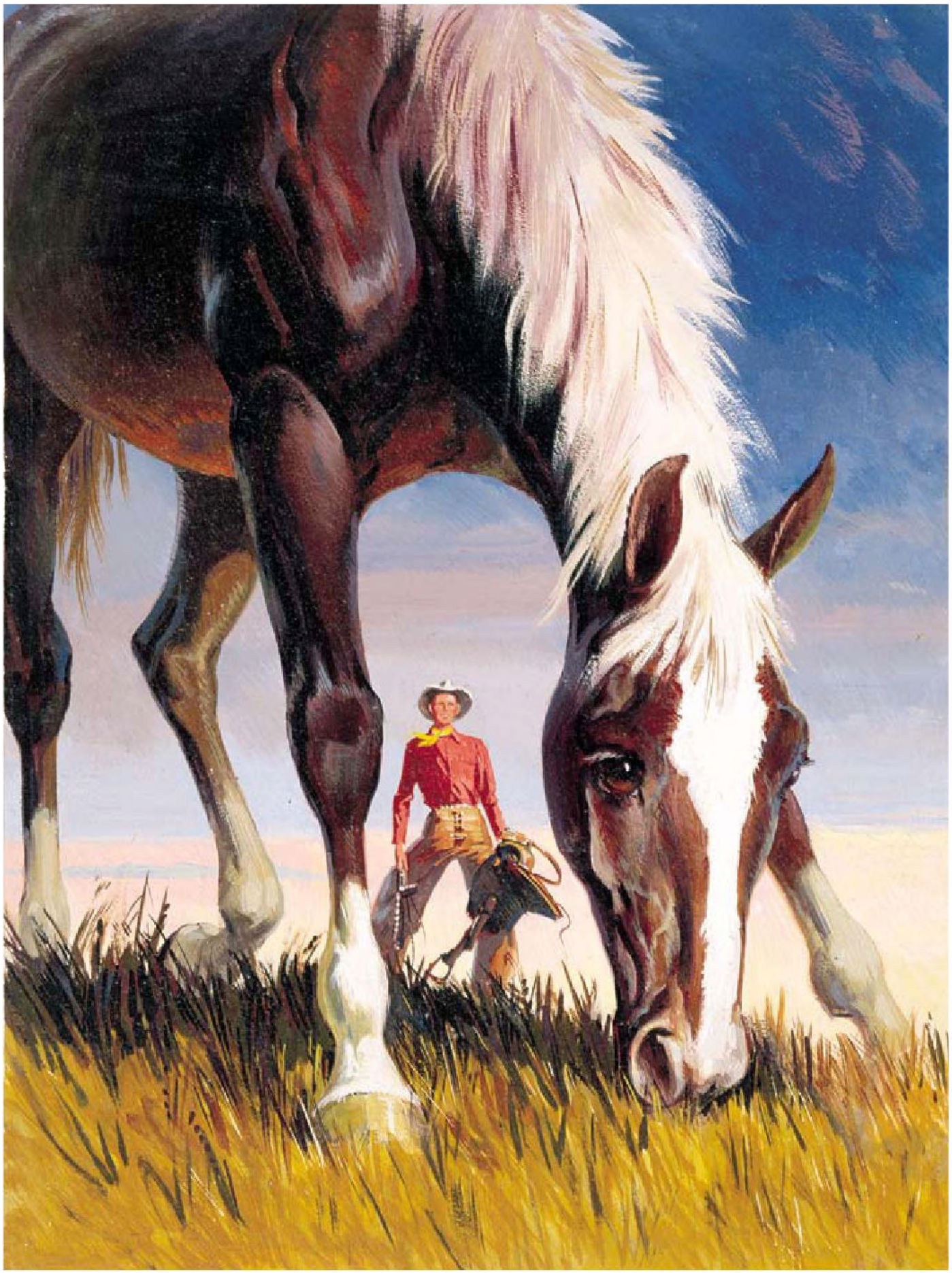
Savitt was fearless in his approach to illustration. Of special note is the cover of *Zane Grey's Stories of the West* (number 28 titled "The Gunfighter") and the photo of Savitt himself posing for reference. He wasn't satisfied just painting an outlaw evading capture on a running horse; Savitt painted his subjects running at a foreshortened three-quarter pose and from a bug's eye point of view. Obviously, Savitt could pose himself for reference but he had to come up with the position of the horse out of his head. His expertise with horses was a great advantage when he was asked to paint horses in any situation an art director could suggest. He could render a hunter jumper as masterfully as he could paint a bronc rider. When Western Printing needed a cover for its comic book adaptation of the 1959 MGM mega-movie spectacular *Ben-Hur* (#1052), they got Savitt to do the honors.

Savitt posing for a Dell Comics ***Silvertip*** cover, 1950s.

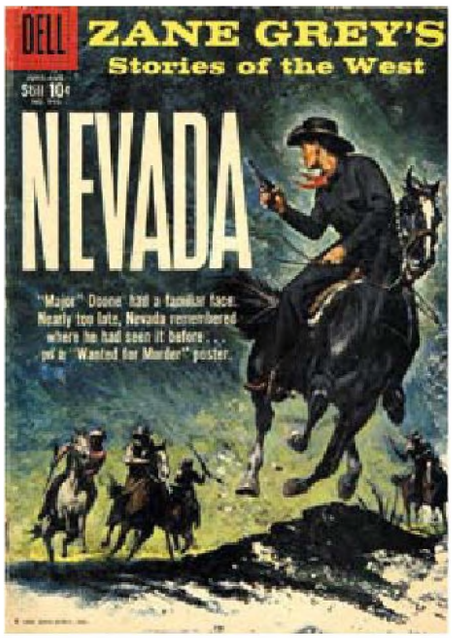
Savitt's Dell Comic covers have been reproduced on lunch boxes, puzzles, pocket knifes and even rodeo posters, most of the time with no credit. His comic book covers, which are reprinted worldwide, have shown up in some impressive places. A half-dozen Trigger covers are on permanent display at the Roy Rogers and Dale Evans Museum in California (Savitt's brother Al illustrated many of the interiors). The prestigious Gene Autry Western Heritage Museum in Los Angeles has copies of *Gene Autry's Champion* covers in its archives of which Savitt painted 26. Savitt's covers have been reproduced in books on The Lone Ranger. He painted three *Lone Ranger* comic book covers and all 36 of the *Hi-Yo Silver* covers. *Hi-Yo Silver* is arguably one of the best western comics from the 1950s. Dell focused a powerhouse of writing and drawing talents to produce this western masterpiece and all were available in a single comic book for the modest price of 10 cents!

I had part of my Savitt comic book collection with me when I interviewed him in 1996 at his home in New Salem. Many covers he hadn't seen in forty years. Although he confirmed all as his work, he couldn't remember what he painted for Dell Comics. He was amazed at how prolific he'd been early in his career. When I showed him the *Ben-Hur* cover, his comment was, "No I don't remember anything about it but it's mine and I had a ball doing it."

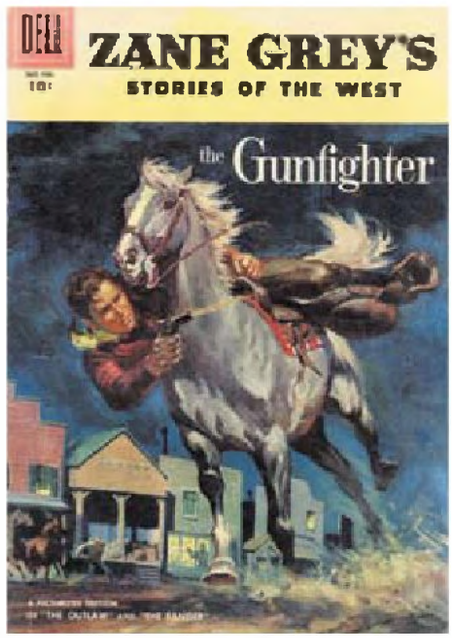
Savitt gave each comic cover 100 percent and it was obvious that he took great joy in his assignments. However, he saw them not only as weekly challenges, but also as income and as opportunities to move on to greener pastures. It didn't seem to bother Savitt that Dell gave him no credit. He told me, "I never thought of those things. I never thought about copyright and all that. I did the job." The comic book industry was notorious at first for not acknowledging individuals, never mind an artist's rights, royalty fees, and the return of original art. In the world of comic books, Savitt's name remained largely unknown for decades. In 1995 the prestigious *Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide*, the blue book on comic book collecting, finally recognized Sam for his Dell covers. Essays on Savitt eventually appeared in *The Comic Book Buyer's Guide*, the best-known weekly journal on the genre.



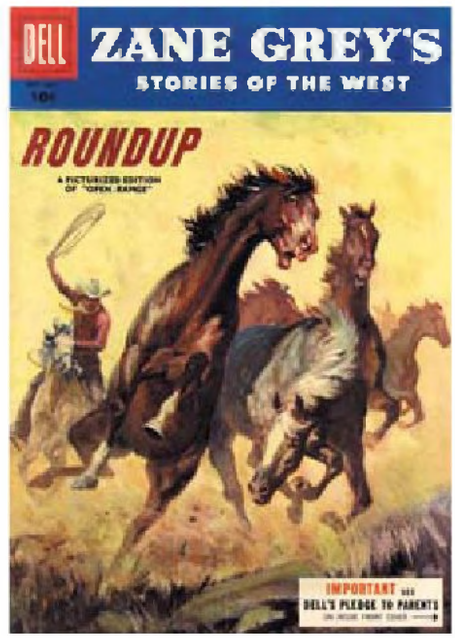
Gene Autry's Champion #15, Aug./Oct. 1954.



Zane Grey's Stories of the West. Dell #996, 1959.



Zane Grey's Stories of the West. Dell #28, 1956.



Zane Grey's Stories of the West. Dell #27, 1955.

Years after finishing work for Dell, Savitt returned to Western Printing in hopes of salvaging some of his originals, but by then it was too late. They had long since disappeared. He was able to locate only three of the 147 covers he had painted.

Savitt posing for cover above.

Work Methods and Mediums

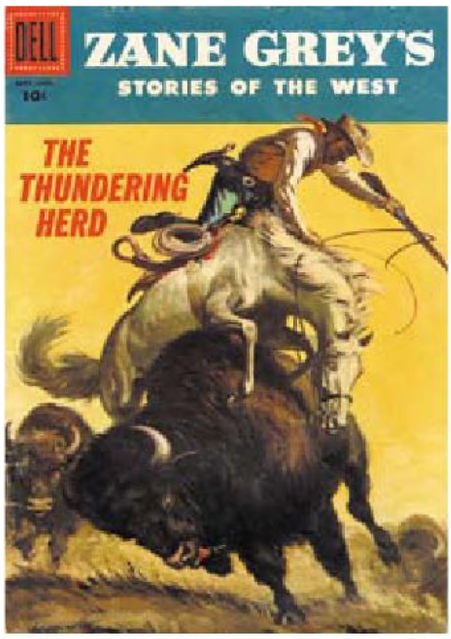
Whether with dry media such as pencils and charcoal, to wet media such as oils, gouache, casein, watercolor, and ink, Savitt relished in the choreography of color, line, tone, and shape. He was always experimenting, seeing what he could and couldn't do. He was constantly testing the waters with regards to technique.

Savitt didn't just draw with pencils, he painted with them by employing a variety of graphite tips to arrive at the desired results. He would combine lead points right out of a sharpener with wedged points to get halftone effects. With Savitt's solid classical formal art training, he learned that the foundation of any good painting was a good drawing. He worked out most of the composition problems he faced in his painting with pencil and conté crayons. Before he began painting, he worked out the values in black and white.

Similarly, Savitt didn't just paint with brushes in a slow rendered manner, he drew with them. His media of choice was gouache, primarily because of its brilliance, its quick drying time, and it didn't have to be varnished. Another reason Savitt preferred gouache was because it could be washed away for a fresh start. (Gouache, a water-based medium that is primarily applied opaque, can be put down thinly, although it is never as transparent as watercolor.) Speed was important when working for print publications because deadlines were critical. There were also times when corrections were necessary and oil would take too long to dry. Savitt knew that his skills as a draftsman were superficial at best without a solid foundation in equine anatomy, dynamics, psychology, and history. He also sketched from living horses, working quickly just to capture the action with a few lines on paper. Once back in the studio, Savitt was able to transform his visual shorthand into more realized work. Like any good horseman, observing horses was one of his great natural talents.

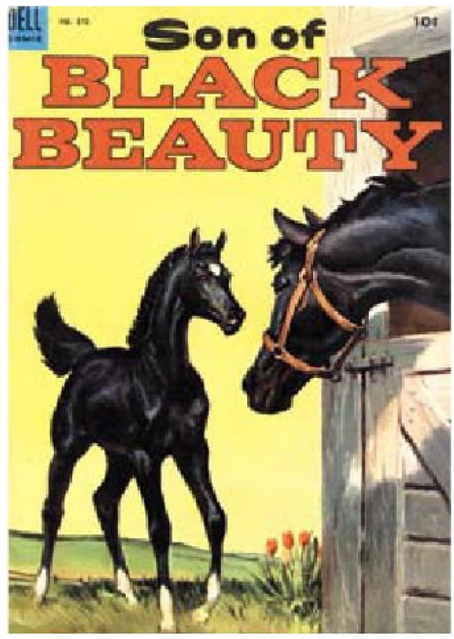
Savitt's painting approach was a tight drawing but a loose attack. He did his preliminary drawing on a kind of vellum/tracing paper, and then he would lay a graphite tone in back of the paper. Next he attached it to his working surface securely so it wouldn't move, then trace it on his working surface making sure to stay within the boundaries of the illustration. He could then flip it back, and it was always on the same spot. Savitt did not use canvas but top illustration board (Whatman Board or Bainbridge 80) because the surfaces could take heavy beatings without degrading, a big advantage with regards to corrections.

Savitt used waterproof ink to tighten his transferred drawing so that, in the event of a mistake while painting, he could wash off the gouache pigment and the drawing would still be visible. He would first lay a general gouache tone over the illustration board, then work into the tones with the drawing showing through. Savitt began with wide brushes and bold, quick strokes. As he defined his subject, he would switch to smaller brushes for a more detailed and refined work. As he roughed in the background texture, such as clouds and sky, the pigments would get more opaque and



Zane Grey's Stories of the West, Dell #31, 1956.

The Lone Ranger, Dell #84, June, 1955.



Son of Black Beauty, Dell #566, 1954.

partially obscure his traced drawing. He could always retrace over the dried pigments if necessary by flipping the vellum drawing of his subject back over his surface, which would save him from having to dig down and lose all the paint he was building up.

Savitt's weeks of preliminary work allowed him to work quickly in his final execution. The final product always suffered when he took shortcuts. He produced many rough drafts to get a horse's action and expression right, while at the same time making sure the equipment and attire were authentic. Savitt, who saw the composition as a whole, really had a feel for art far removed from just horses. Other elements, such as human subjects, clothing, and terrain, weren't simply background but filled out the painting and rendered it complete. In this way, it can be said that Savitt's classic Dell covers stand as fine western paintings.

Sam's brother Al Savitt posing for cover, above.

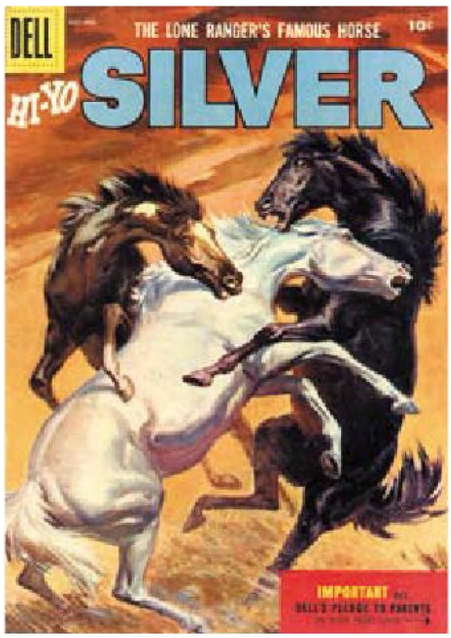
When it came to oils, Savitt often began a painting with a very bold and direct casein lay in. Casein reminded him of working in gouache, as it, too, is water-based. When the casein stage was finished, he would varnish it to pick up the light and then work his oil pigments right on top. Savitt did not use speed driers with oil paints; instead, he used very little medium and a lot of turpentine for his primary lay in. When the painting was finished one couldn't tell which areas were casein and which were oil. Savitt's technical approach to painting was the subject of a 1973 publication by the M. Grumbacher Company, *The Art of Painting Horses.*

Savitt provided horses with the personality one usually finds only in human beings, and in doing so, he also captured their souls. Although he never tried to improve on a horse's God-given beauty, to simply refer to Savitt as a representational painter would miss the mark. He abstracted his subject matter to the extent that any master painter would with regards to composition and good design. Savitt took great care to render horses with the utmost accuracy, but he emphasized and distorted only for effect.

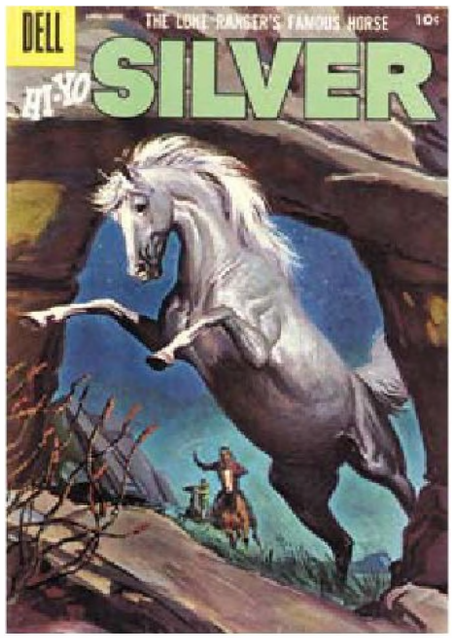
While his approach was a realistic depiction of equine nature, the artistic license he took served to accentuate the nobility and spirit innate in horses. When he blended that foundation with his powerful imagination, the result was one equine masterpiece after another. As with Degas and his ballerinas, Savitt used the endless variety of action poses that horses are capable of to convey beauty and movement. He was often quoted as saying, "To draw horses, I think, is to take a test on how well you know them. You have to know all the shapes of a horse's anatomy and understand how it works. You have to be able to make a horse do anything it could do in real life. And what's more, you have to be able to do this from memory and a knowledge of your subject."

Magazines and Books

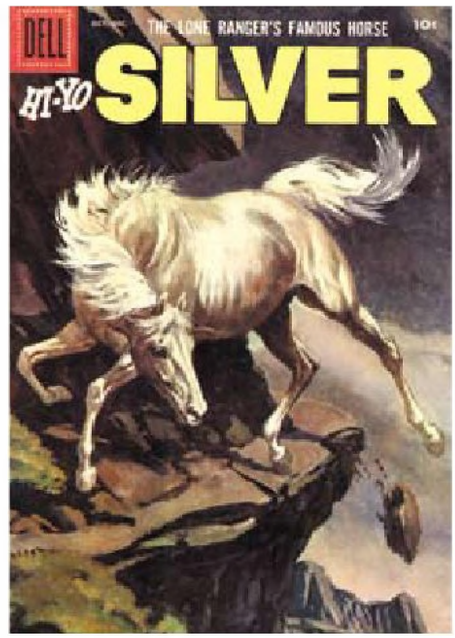
From his experience illustrating comic books, pulps and magazines, it was inevitable that Savitt would find work in the field of book publishing. Beginning in the 1940s Savitt worked for Fiction House, Dell, Popular, Argosy and Standard Publications who put out a whole series of pulp magazines such as *Ranch Romances.* He contributed regularly to such periodicals as *True, Real (For Men), Field and*



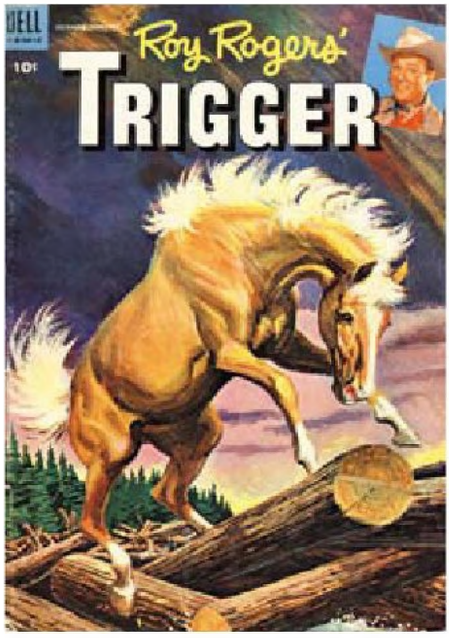
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver, #16, Oct./Dec. 1955.



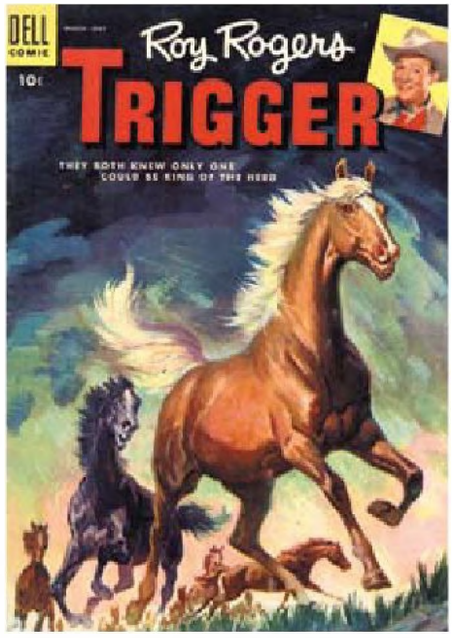
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver, #30, April/June 1959.



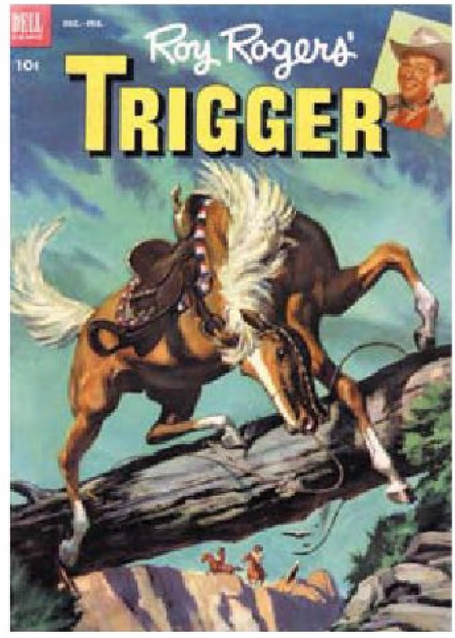
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver, #20, Oct./Dec.1956.



Roy Roger's Trigger, Dell #15, Dec./Feb. 1955.



Roy Roger's Trigger, Dell #16, Mar./May 1955.



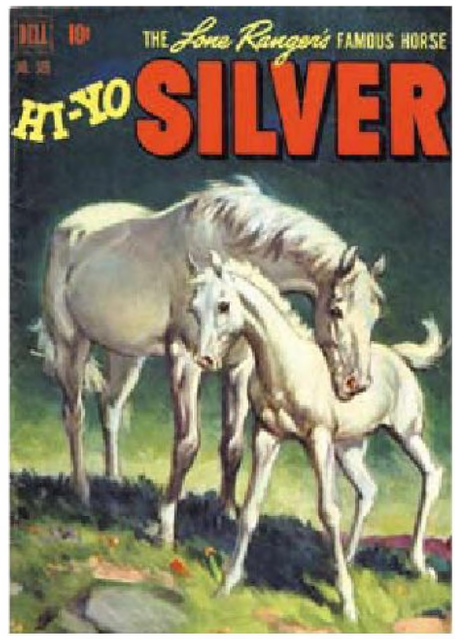
Roy Roger's Trigger, Dell #7, Dec./Feb. 1953.

Stream, *Outdoor Life*, *Sports Afield*, *American Weekly*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Reader's Digest*, *Chronicle of the Horse*, *Boy's Life*, *Country Gentleman*, *Practical Horseman*, and *Equus*. A "Draw Horses with Sam Savitt" page appeared monthly in *Western Horseman* magazine off and on for years. Whenever an equine related project came along, Savitt would go for it. Although his specialty was horses, Savitt painted a variety of animal subjects, especially dogs. A typical work procedure between Savitt and a book editor would be to first agree on a cover concept and technique. Next Savitt would concentrate on interior illustrations. As he read a manuscript he was always looking for interesting picture spots, getting at least one in each chapter.

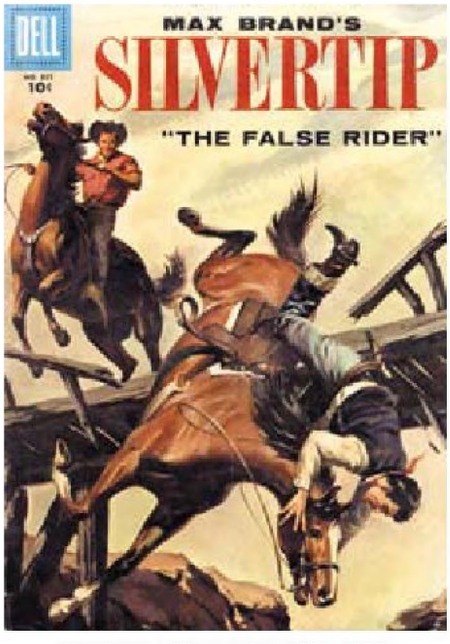
The first book Savitt illustrated was *Learning to Ride, Hunt and Show* for well-known riding instructor Gordon Wright. Wright was friends with another one of Savitt's boyhood heroes, illustrator Paul Brown (1893-1958), who specialized in painting horses in sports and in violent action. Wright had originally asked Brown to illustrate the book. Brown was too busy and, being familiar with Savitt's work, recommended him. Savitt lived in the area and went to Wright's riding academy for an evaluation of his horsemanship and brought his portfolio. Wright saw that Savitt had raw talent as a horseman and agreed to trade riding lessons for book illustrations. Savitt's formal education with horses started with Wright. The illustrations Savitt produced for *Learning to Ride, Hunt and Show* are not merely utilitarian; his horses came alive as part of the learning process of becoming a good rider. In action scenes, which Savitt preferred, his horses positively leap off the page.

The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver, #27, July/Sept. 1958.

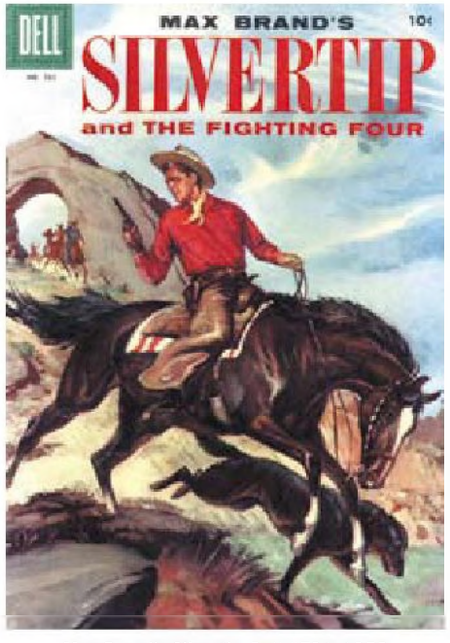
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver, #30, April/June 1959.



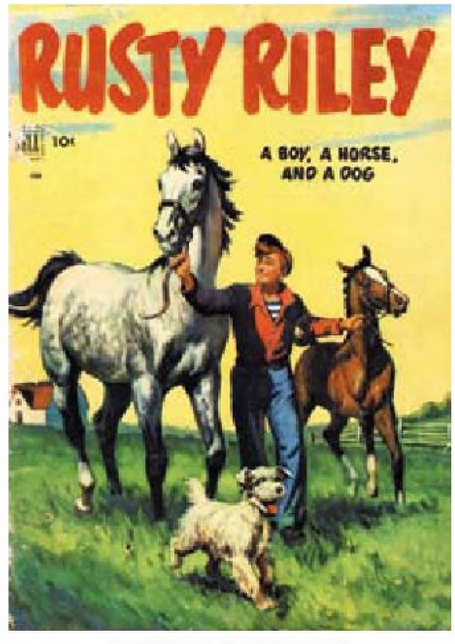
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver, #369, 1951.



Max Brand's Silvertip, Dell #835, 1957.



Max Brand's Silvertip, Dell #731, 1956.



Rusty Riley, Dell #418, 1952.

As a creative person, Savitt was not only motivated to paint horses, but eventually he felt the need to write about them. He was at first cautious about his writing ability but was convinced by his editor to be himself. He recalled that his idol, the legendary western painter and author Will James, was not edited either. James' editors had the wisdom to let him write in his own voice, retaining an authentic cowboy feel.

The first book Savitt wrote was *Step A-Bit, Story of a Foal.* When he first came up with the idea, he had been making drawings of a foal from the time it was born through its first days growing up. One day it occurred to Savitt that maybe he ought to send photostats of his sketches to different publishers. Sharon Banagan, editor at E. P. Dutton, made Savitt an offer. "I want you to do this book just the way these sketches are made, right off the top of your head. Don't embellish them, and don't try to get photographs in it, just use these drawings," she suggested. That's what he did. When they were completed she asked, "Write some words to pull it together." Savitt replied, "I can't write." Banagan suggested, "Oh sure you can, just little simple sentences. This is his first day out, etc." And that's how it started.

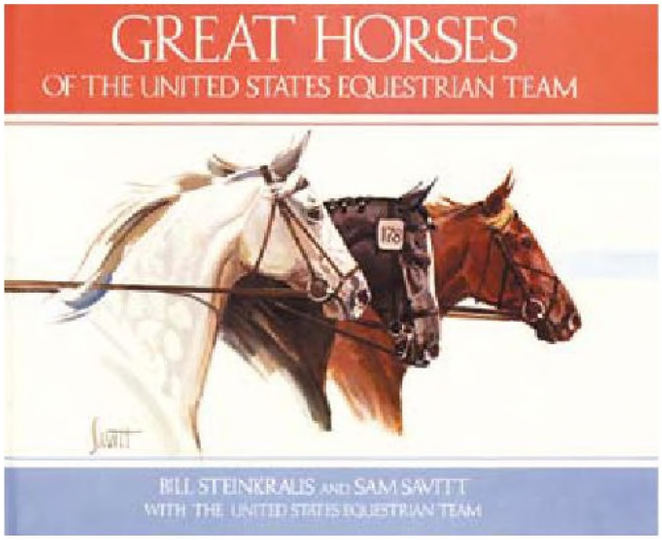
Savitt's second book was the more ambitious *Midnight: Champion Bucking Horse*, which received the Boy's Clubs of America Award. Bucking horses were a specialty of Savitt's and the subject of several of his books including *Rodeo: Cowboys, Bulls and Broncos*. Sam Savitt, a westerner at heart with similar sensibilities to Will James, was also strongly motivated by a love for horses.

Savitt went on to write and co-write 17 books on horses.

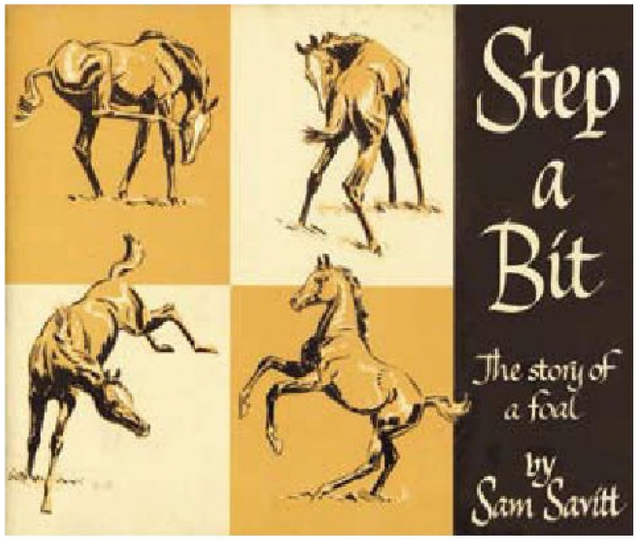
From ***Step a Bit, The Story of a Foal,*** 1956.

From ***Step a Bit, The Story of a Foal***. 1956.

From ***Step a Bit, The Story of a Foal***, 1956.

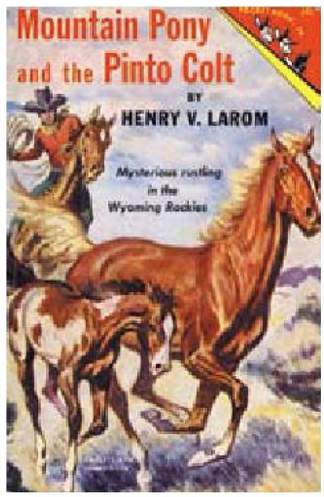

GREAT HORSES
OF THE UNITED STATES EQUESTRIAN TEAM
BILL STEINKRAUS AND SAM SAVITT
WITH THE UNITED STATES EQUESTRIAN TEAM

Great Horses of the U.S. Equestrian Team by Sam Savitt and Bill Steinkraus.

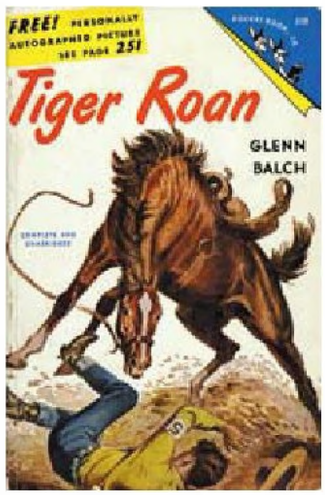


Step a Bit, The Story of a Foal by Sam Savitt. 1956.

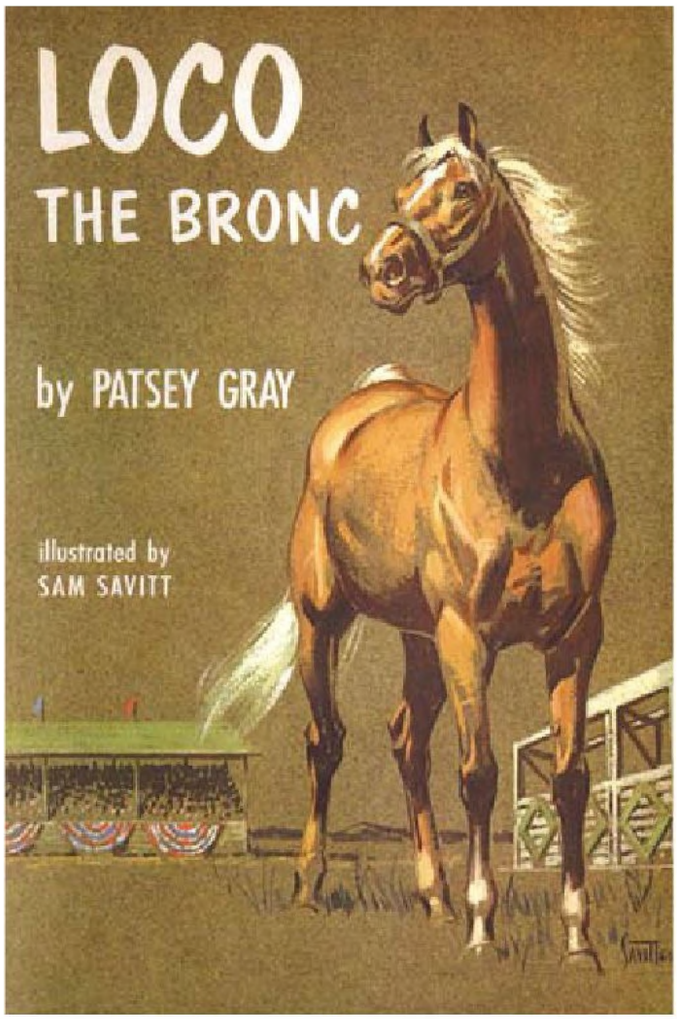
The Silver Brumby by Elyne Mitchell. 1959.



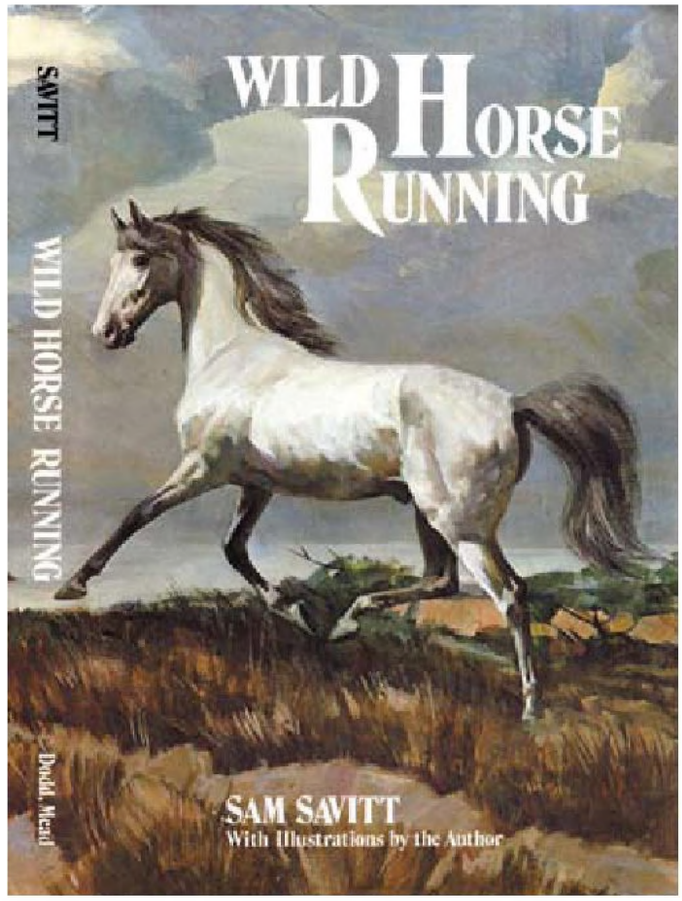
Mountain Pony and the Pinto Colt by Henry V. Larom. Pocket Books, 1951.



Tiger Roan by Glenn Balch. Pocket Books, 1950.



Loco the Bronc by Patsey Gray. 1961.



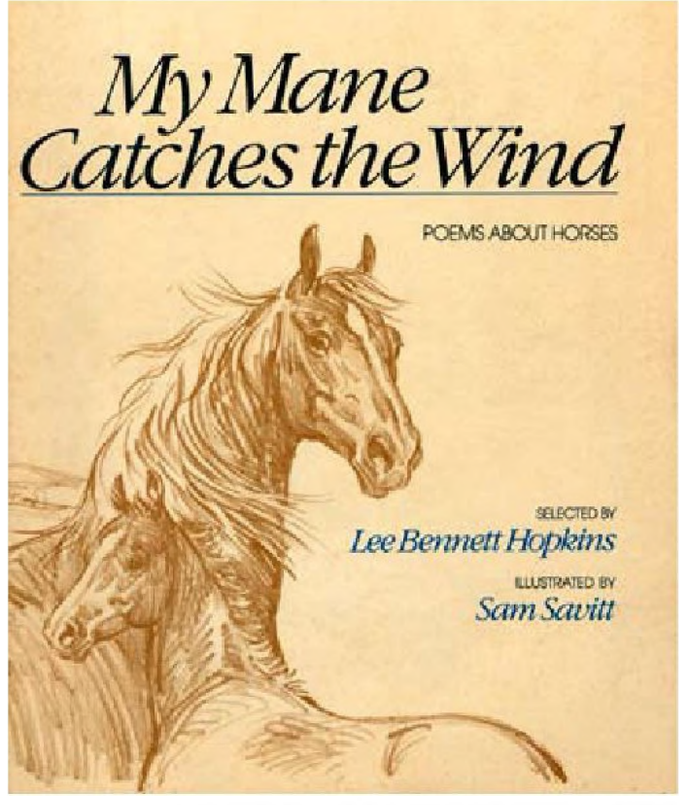
Wild Horse Running by Sam Savitt, 1973.

His *Draw Horses With Sam Savitt* is considered a classic in the field and continues to be reprinted. *Wild Horse Running* won the Literary Guild Award. Over his career Savitt illustrated more than 135 books by other authors.

Black Horse Press

Savitt's success as an illustrator was due to a large part to the support of his wife Bette Orkin. He could not have been the artist he became without her. She took over the business aspects of his career, freeing him to concentrate on his work. In 1963 she started Black Horse Press, a home-based business, to publish, market and distribute his work. Bette ran the business from a studio that they shared on the top floor of their home in North Salem.

Black Horse Press became a cottage industry, offering a number of items such as posters, portfolios, prints, charts, books, original art, etc. Their first project was the "Sam Savitt's Guide To Horses" chart produced by a printer who lived down the road. It was he who suggested that they always prefix titles with Savitt's name. Savitt's illustrated horse charts have been used by a number of encyclopedias including *Grolier's*, and as teaching aids by the Smithsonian Institute. "Sam Savitt's Guide to Horses" went on to sell more than half a million copies. Eventually an entire Savitt



My Mane Catches the Wind by Lee Bennett Hopkins, 1979.

Real for Men Cover illustration, Vol. 1, No. 6, March, 1953.

series of large, full-color charts were offered depicting a wide range of equestrian subjects from dressage to rodeo. Black Horse Press was later bought by Half Halt Press.

Special Assignments, Gallery Work, Private Commissions, and Awards

Savitt's work can be found on placemats, coasters, mugs, and so forth. In the late 1960s, a series of 500-piece jigsaw puzzles were released through Springbok Editions. Savitt painted a number of colorful horse-related motifs, including a circular puzzle celebrating the Racing Hall of Fame, and octagon puzzles titled "International Horse Jumping" and "Mares and Foals."

Savitt was named the official artist for the United States Equestrian Team in 1956. In 1968 he was commissioned to cover the equestrian events at the Olympic Games in Mexico. He also executed a poster in 1991 for the Kentucky Derby and covered the 1992 Grand National in England for *Equus* magazine.

Savitt did not differentiate commercial art from easel art, because for him they were the same thing. He viewed all of his work as fine art. Savitt earned a reputation as one of this country's finest equestrian artists, and articles on him followed in such publications as *Art Director and Studio News*, *Equus*, *Equine Images* and *Chronicle of the Horse*. He had a number of one-man exhibitions, and his equestrian paintings and drawings are in many private collec-

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tions, including the Grumbacker Collection, August Busch, Raymond Firestone, and Jean Kennedy Smith.

In 1982, while Savitt was in Kentucky judging an art show at the Red Mile Track, he took a day to visit Claiborne Farms, the home of Triple Crown racing legend Secretariat. Savitt was given a close look at the great thoroughbred. He made sketches and, once back in his studio, he completed a portrait.

A private commission of note by Savitt was done in 1985 for Mrs. William Randolph Hearst Jr. Savitt did the cover and a series of interior paintings and drawings for a limited edition book titled *Horses of San Simeon*. Only 1,500 copies were produced, and each came signed with a handsome outer sleeve and over 275 pages of artwork, photos and text. Savitt and his wife stayed at the Hearst Castle in San Simeon while he was working on the project.

In 1986 Savitt received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the North American Horseman's Association, which also honored him as "Equine Artist of Distinction." *Equus* magazine referred to him in its 10th anniversary issue as one of the "movers and shakers in the horse world." He was the only artist honored.

Drawing and Painting Workshops

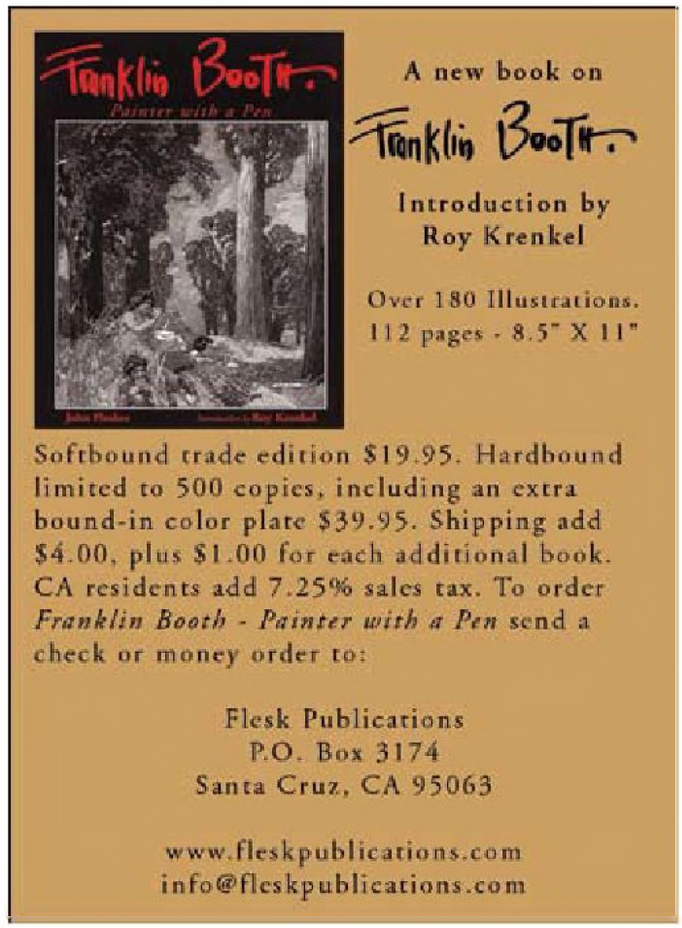
Savitt gave drawing and painting workshops across the country, sharing techniques he'd developed over the years. He instructed his students in horse anatomy and in techniques for drawing from memory. His classes began with a concentration on drawing fundamentals, then moved on to painting the standing horse and finally advancing action poses. Savitt also recognized that being able to draw enabled his students to correct distortions found in photographs, which were a common mistake novices made. Savitt said, "In order to create a good painting of a horse from life or from a photograph, an artist must paint what he or she knows in addition to what he sees, and he must know a great deal more than he sees." He complained that, "Many equestrian painters today do not really draw horses. They copy with paint all the lights and darks they see in a photograph, but what they do not seem to know is that photographs often distort form. Unless an artist understands the construction of the horse and how it functions, his pictures are no more than a meaningless collection of light and dark areas."

Savitt gave seminars at the Equine Artists Workshop in Tryon, North Carolina, and the Scottsdale Artist's School in Arizona. He was a founding member of the American Academy of Equine Art in Lexington, Kentucky, and served as its Dean of Education.

Savitt loved to teach and related to it as "a two-way thing. It was gratifying. I had to reevaluate a lot of the things that I did automatically so I could help somebody. I could do a thing and think nothing of it, but what if I'm trying to explain it to somebody? What do I do? So I had to think of things like that. And it made it interesting for me. . ."

Savitt ultimately taught his students "sight is a faculty, but seeing is an art." He learned over years of experience that,

Real for Men cover illustration. June, 1953.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Portrait of Secretariat by Sam Savitt. 1982.

The Morgan by Sam Savitt. From ***America's Horses***. 1966.

"All you learn is the craft. You can learn the fundamentals, how to draw, [but] that won't make you an artist." Many artists are born, not made. Artistic sensibilities may to be within a person already and, if they're lucky and hard working, through education and experience, those important sensibilities are brought out.

The Last Ride

Savitt was a man of deep passion and boundless energy both in his work and in his private life. It was fitting that the spirit of the horse in action, a creature that can stir feelings and impart a profound sense for being alive, fascinated him more than anything else and permeated his art. Savitt was not the kind of man who dwelled on the past, and he remained focused on current projects and the planning of future work. Once, when he was stranded in a hospital room for five days due to a back operation, he used the time to fill a sketch pad with scores of the horse-related drawings that seemed to flow out of him like water. "I would sit there and tell Bette, I don't want any visitors, I just want to sit here with this pad. I'd think, what am I going to work on? Let my mind go and then start doing it."

One doesn't retire from the kind of life Sam Savitt had. Instead, it is taken away. Savitt continued to ride his thoroughbred McClaurey into his 80s until he finally had to refrain and hang up his spurs. A few years later he suffered a minor stroke and, though it was not completely disabling, it took away the independence he cherished and his ability to draw and paint. Once he lost his artistic gifts, Savitt became depressed and lost his will to live. He died on Christmas Day of 2000 at the age of 83.

When I was young, comics were magical. It seemed to me that they were created in some far off land by people who remained anonymous at worst and elusive at best. Never in my wildest dreams did I think that I'd meet, much less become friends with, someone I admired from the world of comic books.

I was tremendously honored when I got to deliver one of the eulogies at a memorial service for Sam in the spring of 2001. As I stood before his family, friends, and admirers, I spoke of how I came to be there because of a comic book I bought in 1953 when I was six years old. It was issue number nine of *Gene Autry's Champion*, with a spectacular cover rendering of a sorrel stallion escaping from a burning barn. It had a powerful and enduring impact on me. It wasn't until 1990 that I finally found out who painted it when I bought a copy of *Equus* magazine #150 featuring an article titled "The Mustangs of the West," with accompanying paintings by Sam Savitt. I wrote him in care of *Equus* asking if he had painted covers for Dell Comics. A few weeks later a letter of confirmation arrived from Savitt himself.

Sam Savitt was one of those fortunate people who turned two passions into his life's work. From his early comic book covers to his last gallery paintings, Savitt proved to be master observer and translator of the life lessons that horses teach us: patience and grace. I continue to be enriched by Savitt's work, and I picture him now as I always have—riding a fine horse with a pencil and sketch pad close at hand. ●

(The author would like to thank Bette Orkin, Robert W. Phillips, Diane Bowen, Eva Radford, Brian Speer, and Richard Oberg for their time and effort towards the preparation of this essay. *Article copyright 2002 by Leo Pando. Photographs copyright 2002 by Sam Savitt.*

Leo Pando with Sam Savitt. 1996.

Born in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Leo Pando attended the Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles. He worked as an illustrator in New York City for 11 years. He is co-editor of *The Old Cowboy Picture Show*, a newsletter devoted to B-westernsfrom the 1940s and 50s. Currently, Pando is working at Colby College in Maine, where he lives with his wife Diane and their American paint mare Navajo.

Sam Savitt Checklist:

In Memory of Robert W. Phillips

Very special thanks must be given to Robert W. Phillips for his contribution to this Sam Savitt comicology.

Sam Savitt Comicology

One hundred forty-seven painted comic book covers by Sam Savitt have been accounted for each confirmed by the artist. Eighteen supplemental pages were also identified. A supplemental page is an interior cover illustrating some aspect of horsemanship or an inside-cover breed portrait. They are noted after each entry. ef = educational filler, bp = breed portrait. According to Savitt there exists one interior story titled "Sundown Saunders" that he created, wrote and illustrated (the comic book it was published in is unknown). Sam Savitt worked for Dell Comics from 1951 to 1961. Some of his Dell covers were later reprinted through the 1970s by Gold Key Comics. Dell's predecessor (listed in parenthesis below), Savitt also painted two covers specifically for Gold Key. List compiled by Leo Pando and Robert W. Phillips; corrections and additional information welcome.

The Dell covers may be divided into three categories. **Four Color Comics** (32): Some comics for this versatile title were one-time shots; some ran more than one issue; some were based on stories by western writers Zane Grey, Max Brand and Luke Short, and some were based on movies such as *Ben-Hur*. **Miscellaneous Comics** (39): Sam Savitt produced a variety of work for Dell comics, including a series of covers for *Western Round Up* and *Zane Grey's Stories of the West*. He also did covers for such favorites as *Red Ryder*, *The Disco Kid*, and *The Lone Ranger*. **Equine Stars** (76): Equine stars such as Trigger Champion and Silver started under the Four Color Comic imprint, then went on to receive their own title. These horses were the on-screen partners of the most famous cowboys of the day.

Equine Stars

Gene Autry's Champion:

Gene Autry's Champion 3 (Aug./Oct. 1951)
Gene Autry's Champion 4 (Nov./Jan. 1952)
Gene Autry's Champion 5 (Feb./April 1952)
Gene Autry's Champion 6 (May/July 1952)
Gene Autry's Champion 7 (Aug./Oct. 1952)
Gene Autry's Champion 8 (Nov./Jan. 1953)
Gene Autry's Champion 9 (Feb./April 1953)
Gene Autry's Champion 10 (May/July 1953)
Gene Autry's Champion 11 (Aug./Oct. 1953)
Gene Autry's Champion 12 (Nov./Jan. 1954)
Gene Autry's Champion 13 (Feb./April 1954)
Gene Autry's Champion 14 (May/July 1954 - ef)
Gene Autry's Champion 15 (Aug./Oct. 1954 - ef)
Gene Autry's Champion 16 (Nov./Jan. 1955)
Gene Autry's Champion 17 (Feb./April 1955 - ef)
Gene Autry's Champion 18 (May/July 1955)
Gene Autry's Champion 19 (Aug./Oct. 1955 - ef)

Gene Autry and Champion:

Gene Autry and Champion 112 (Nov./Dec., 1956)
Gene Autry and Champion 113 (Jan./Mar. 1957)
Gene Autry and Champion 114 (April/June 1957)
Gene Autry and Champion 115 (July/Sept. 1957)
Gene Autry and Champion 116 (Oct./Dec. 1957)
Gene Autry and Champion 117 (Jan./Mar. 1958)
Gene Autry and Champion 118 (April/June 1958)
Gene Autry and Champion 119 (July/Sept. 1958)
Gene Autry and Champion 120 (Oct./Dec. 1958)
Gene Autry and Champion 121 (Jan./Mar. 1959)

The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver:

The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 3 (July/Sept. 1952)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 4 (Oct./Dec. 1952)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 5 (Jan./Mar. 1953)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 6 (April/June 1953)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 7 (July/Sept. 1953)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 8 (Oct./Dec. 1953)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 9 (Jan./Mar. 1954)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 10 (April/June 1954)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 11 (July/Sept. 1954)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 12 (Oct./Dec. 1954)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 13 (Jan./Mar. 1955 - ef)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 14 (April/June 1955)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 15 (July/Sept. 1955)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 16 (Oct./Dec. 1955)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 17 (Jan./Mar. 1956)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 18 (April/June 1956 - bp)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 19 (July/Sept. 1956)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 20 (Oct./Dec. 1956)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 21 (Jan./Mar. 1957 - ef)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 22 (April/June 1957 - bp)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 23 (July/Sept. 1957)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 24 (Oct./Dec., 1957)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 25 (Jan./Mar. 1958)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 26 (April/June 1958)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 27 (July/Sept. 1958)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 28 (Oct./Dec. 1958)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 29 (Jan./Mar. 1959)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 30 (April/June 1959)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 31 (July/Sept. 1959)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 32 (Oct./Dec., 1959)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 33 (Jan./Mar. 1960)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 34 (April/June 1960)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 35 (July/Sept. 1960)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver 36 (Oct./Dec., 1960)

Roy Rogers' Trigger:

Roy Rogers' Trigger 3 (Dec./Feb. 1952)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 4 (March/May 1952)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 5 (June/Aug. 1952)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 6 (Sept./Nov. 1952)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 7 (Dec./Feb. 1953)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 8 (Mar./May 1953)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 9 (June/Aug. 1953)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 10 (Sept./Nov. 1953)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 11 (Dec./Feb. 1954)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 12 (Mar./May 1954)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 13 (June/Aug. 1954)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 14 (Sept./Nov. 1954)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 15 (Dec./Feb. 1955)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 16 (Mar./May 1955 - bp)
Roy Rogers' Trigger 17 (June/Aug. 1955)

Four Color Comics

The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver #369 (1951)
Zane Grey's Riders of the Purple Sage #372 (1951)
The Lone Ranger's Hi Yo Silver #392 (1952)
Zane Grey's Forlorn River #395 (1952)
Rusty Riley, a Boy, a Horse and a Dog #418 (1952)
Zane Grey's Wildfire #433 (1952)
Rusty Riley, a Boy, a Horse and a Dog #451 (1953)
Rusty Riley, a Boy, a Horse and a Dog #486 (1953)
Son of Black Beauty #510 (1953)
Zane Grey's Stories of the West - The Rustlers #532 (1953)
Walt Disney's Stormy #537 (1954)
Rusty Riley, a Boy, a Horse and a Dog #554 (1954)
Son of Black Beauty #566 (1954 - ef)
Gypsy Colt #568 (1954)
Zane Grey's Shadow on the Trail #604 (1954)
Sir Lancelot #606 (1954)
Earnest Haycox's Western Marshall #640 (1955)
Max Brand's Silvertip and the Stolen Stallion #667 (1955 - bp)
Max Brand's Silvertip and the Fighting Four #731 (1956)
Luke Short's Bounty Guns #739 (1956)
Lee Hunter Indian Fighter #779 (1957)
Luke Short's Savage Range #807 (1957)
Walt Disney's Paul Revere's Ride #822 (1957 - Gold Key #34)
Tales of the Pony Express #829 (1957)
Max Brand's Silvertip and the False Rider #835 (1957)
The Vigilantes #839 (1957)
Luke Short's trumpets West #875 (1957)
Lee Hunter Indian Fighter #904 (1958)
The Grey Ghost #911
Tales of the Pony Express #942 (1958)
Zane Grey's Stories of the West - Nevada #996 (1959 - Gold Key 10131-411)
Ben Hur #1052 (1959)

Miscellaneous Comics

Ben Bonde and His Mountain Men #7 (May/July 1956)
Ben Bonde and His Mountain Men #9 (Nov./Jan. 1957)
Ben Bonde and His Mountain Men #16 (Aug./Oct. 1958)
Boys' and Girls' March of Comics #170 (Indian Chief, 1961)
Boys' and Girls' March of Comics #215 (Hi Yo Silver, 1961)
The Disco Kid #32 (July/Sept. 1956)
The Golden West Rodeo Treasury #1 (1957)
Indian Chief #7 (July/Sept. 1952)
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Sam Savitt Bibliography

Sam Savitt wrote and illustrated 17 books. He also illustrated over 130 books for other authors, for books that Savitt illustrated, the title, publisher, and date published are noted. Additional information has been provided for the books Savitt both wrote and illustrated. Corrections and additional information are welcome. This list was compiled by Bette Orkin and Leo Pando.

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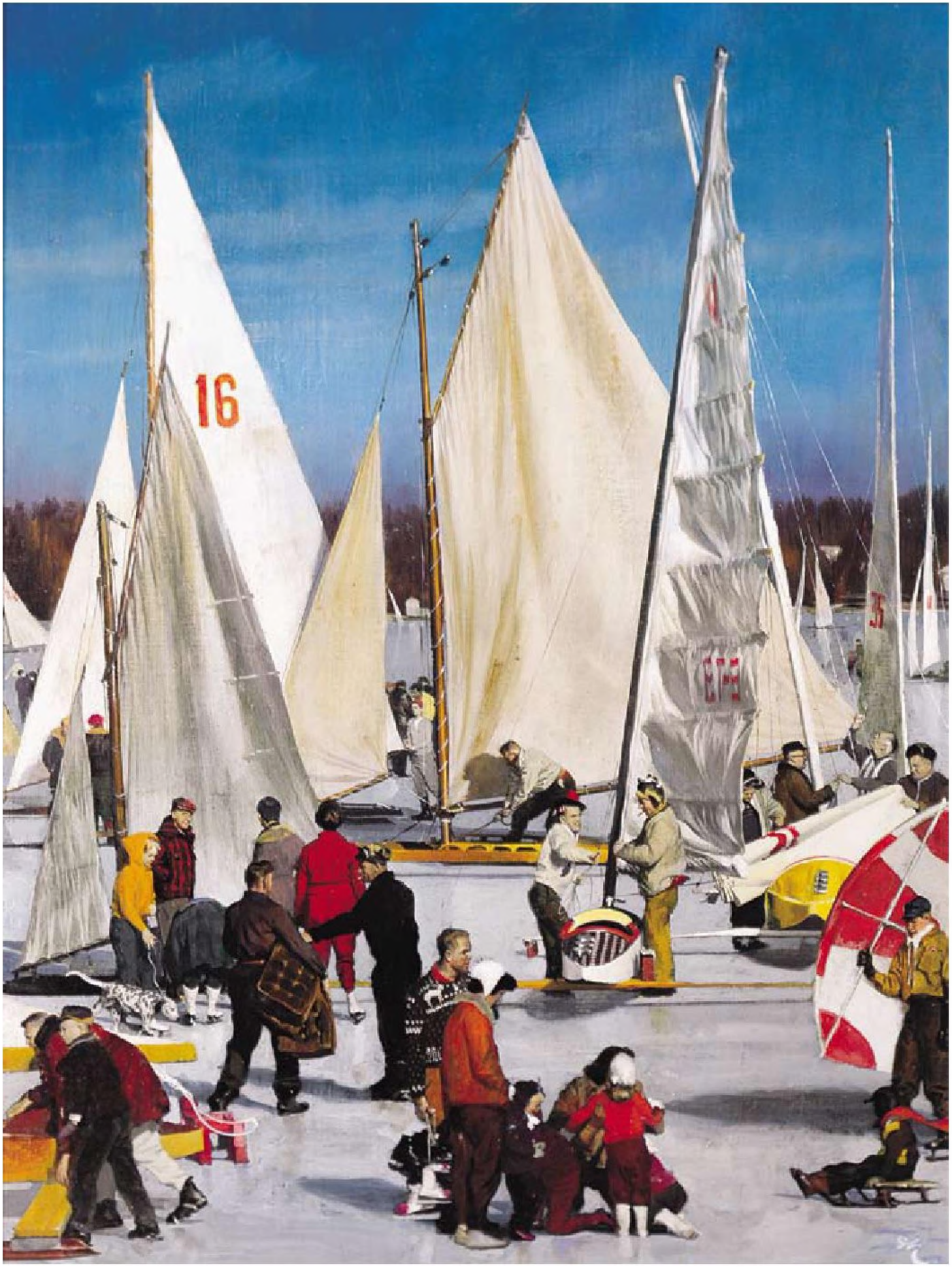


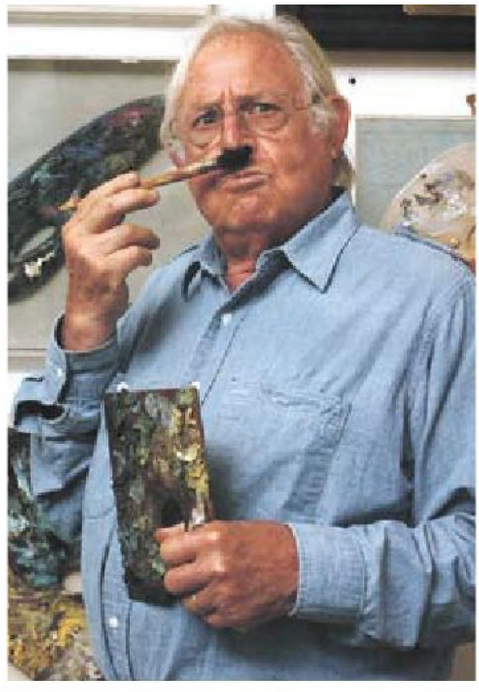
"Ice Boats in Red Bank, New Jersey." Oil on canvas mounted on board.

Stanley Meltzoff

Metamorphoses of a Picture Maker

by Stanley Meltzoff

At 85, I am somewhat bemused at the variety of my work. My over-diversification was not that of a dilettante fluttering from whim to whimsy, since necessity required the frequent reinvention of myself, as it did for others of my generation. Some makers, like Norman Rockwell, live in harmony with their times, but I and others in my generation did not. The golden age of American illustration began with Howard Pyle and ended soon after the death of Norman Rockwell. His career matched that of the spread of mass color reproduction in print until it was surpassed by TV and videotape. Norman Rockwell was magnificently in harmony with the changes. He began to work when newspapers and magazines started to reproduce pictures in halftone on high speed presses for entertaining consumers. His skills and perceptions improved along with four-color printing. As the audience for both grew he was able to picture great public themes, personalities, and events in paradigmatic and unforgettable forms. The public for Rockwell and the other great picture-makers of his time was so enormous that famous illustrators were folk heroes (before the phrase became the name of a correspondence school). These legendary figures were still working when I was young, but I am probably the last living artist to have done a *Saturday Evening Post* cover for Ken Stuart. As TV entered our lives, I came to realize that I was in a diminishing craft which no hero could resuscitate. Illustrators had to learn how to live as ephemeral antiquities; picture makers had to learn how to make pictures with machines.



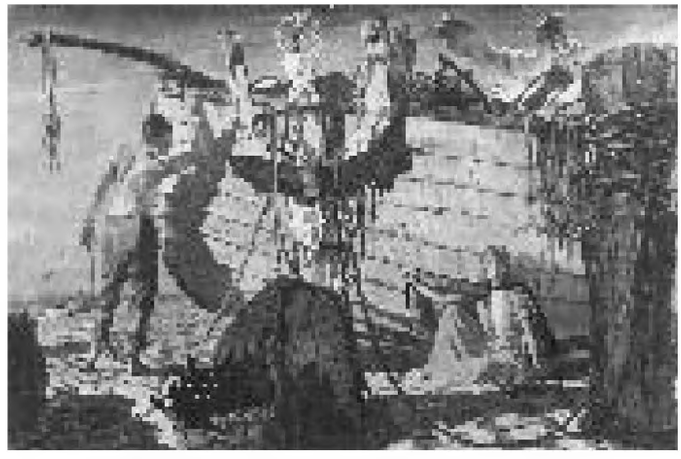
Stanley Meltzoff with elements of his *Reliquarium*, 1993. Photograph by Henry Groskinsky.

As a happy first born boy I was sure that I could overcome whatever difficult times were ahead. Children then were encouraged to go through public schools as fast as they were able, so that by age 12 I was in a bright boys prep school, by 15 in college, and by 19 graduated. Both schools were well equipped with art departments. I learned to draw plaster casts in charcoal, and to catch the flexure of muscles in models rapidly changing poses. I spent days staring at wilting flowers, decaying animals, and tarnishing metal in still life set-ups in order to get the exact values and color notes in oil. I was the art editor and humor columnist of my high school newspaper, yearbook, and college humor magazine, graduating with a degree in science and an unexpected *Phi Beta Kappa* key. I went down to Union Square for night classes in art history which Meyer Schapiro was giving to young political activists. I joined a fellow students' commercial art studio, and on graduation I was hired as a teaching assistant.

Living on $10 per week was as rich as could be conceived. A totally different part of my life were the four months each summer on the Jersey Shore. Mastering the surf, diving, fishing, fighting, and getting to know girls was another kind of experience. I became a beach boy struck dumb by the sun and burbling in the surf.

In the midst of the Great Depression it was probable that no one could make much money in any capacity. It was likely that I would spend my life as a teacher. One of my teachers of painting, a dignified, graybearded Prof. Haskell, had been a pupil of Whistler some 50 years earlier. Little of what he taught was of much practical use to an adolescent painter in 1935. If I set out to learn what the great illustrators were doing, as I did, and to teach it to others, what use would that be 10 years later? Something new had to be learned and I had to teach myself. Seventy years later I must still ask myself, what skills are still useful in an age of digital cameras and Adobe Photoshop?

A tide of art historians fleeing fascism crested in New York, where Robert Lehman, among others, gave an endowment and a building to NYU and founded the most remarkable graduate school of art history ever to exist. The eminent professors outnumbered the students. Junior faculty assistants like myself were encouraged to enroll and take degrees free of tuition, persuaded further by stipends for travel to Europe, books, and other aids to living. The Institute of Fine Arts of NYU is my true alma mater in the arts. My particular master was Walter Friedlander, my idol Erwin Panofsky, and my thesis was supervised by Meyer Schapiro as well as Friedlander. The subject was a study of the history of taste, the sudden revival of the brothers Le Naim, Vermeer, Breughel, and El Greco. It was a precursor of what is now called reception theory.



"The Embarkation for the Wedding." Oil over gesso on panel.

With the aid of a grant, my last summer in grad school was spent in France and Italy just as the war started. I had a war good beyond any of my terrors and imaginings. I found myself with an intelligence unit in North Africa, misassigned to a signals outfit in Casablanca. There I filled two sketchbooks with Moroccan exotica. I learned that the army newspaper *Stars & Stripes* was being set up in Algiers and I edged my way in as a factotum. When Sicily was invaded I helped set up an edition in Palermo. I wrote the news, drew the spots and battle maps, composed a daily set of Italian phrases for the troops, and confiscated zinc coffin liners in order to make the photo-engravings. Soon after the landings at Salerno, we set up an edition in Naples.

Muddy and bloody war was being slowly fought up the Italian peninsula. There was close to a 70 percent turnover of raw recruits from the replacement depot each month. Every journalist hungry for fame, including myself, kept trying to wangle an assignment to the front, to crouch under shell fire from concealed Panzer tanks and scribble our notes. We wanted to record the war in the way that had made the reputations of Stephen Crane and Ernest Hemingway. The 45th division was being ground down, like others, and they had a divisional news leaflet with cartoons of unshaven and muddy grunts. As art editor for the army newspaper, I was able to persuade Bill Mauldin to leave his beloved National Guard division and work for his arch-enemy, the US Army HQ. It was my first brush with the instant and enormous effect of celebrity.

Colonels humbly asked if there was any way I could get them an audience with Sgt. Mauldin in the next office. Horrible as it is to confess, this was war at its finest from the viewpoint of an army correspondent. Naples was being bombed at night, our press and lodgings in the vast Galleria caught fire, people fled along the ledges and jumped from their windows. Vesuvius began a massive eruption under a full moon. By pulling every string I got sent to the landing at Anzio. When that front line broke open I entered Rome with the first squads of GI's to set up an edition of *Stars & Stripes* to welcome our troops.

I enjoyed three years in Italy as the war moved up the peninsula, but only as a witness to battle. With a pistol on my hip and a jeep at my service, I completed the tour of Italy I had begun as a graduate student. In Palermo the Oratorios lined with stucchi by Serpotta filled me with worshipful delight. In Rome, Florence, and Venice I saw close up the masterworks I had known only from books. The whole inventory of paintings in the Uffizi was leaning against the walls of the Sitwell's villa south of the Arno where they had been tucked away in the countryside in case there might be a battle for Florence. A Canadian platoon in the valley was languidly exchanging mortar shells with a German battery across the Arno. The villa was empty, the room I entered was empty. A rooster was perched on a stack of panels in front of which was the *Primavera* of Botticelli. Flora, life size, was scattering her flowers. As in my dreams I stepped up and kissed my ideal of beauty full on the lips without response.

Was I looking at these masterworks as a picture maker or as an art historian? In time, both. I went back to Italy very often in later years. Over the four years in Italy, it was Tiepolo whose skill I hopelessly yearned to emulate. But working on the newspaper I had decided to become a commercial artist rather than an academic writer after the war.

"The Destruction of the Myrtle Avenue El." Oil over gesso on panel.

"The Birth of Autumn." Oil over gesso on panel.

"An Improbable Event." ***Scientific American*** cover. Oil over gesso on panel.

Art directors, designers, illustrators, cartoonists, and sign painters were then lumped together as commercial artists, a term which still makes my flesh crawl. We were thought of as tradesmen, not artists; our talents and appetites were coarse and low. Though we might make a little money, we were far inferior to fine artists nobly starving. Who could then foresee the triumph of minor commercial artists later transfigured into the masters of Modern American Fine Art?

Back from the war, I returned to teaching; first at City College and later at Pratt until I could make my living as a picture maker. In the late 1930's and the late '40s modern American art wavered between social realism and social expressionism, tinged with Surrealism. I had considered myself to be a surrealist since the first Dali exhibition I had seen in 1936, though I did not then see that the greatest of Surrealists would be Réné Magritte. I had my own studio in a midtown loft on 46th street. My first wife, Alice, walked in as a model and three days later we were married.

Overflowing my studio walls was a bouillabaisse of totally different tastes, since I liked almost everything. I picked up whatever jobs I could as an ex-army artist with no track record to guide art directors. Ads, faces, figures, objects, black and white, sometimes in color, and an occasional magazine job from some kindly art editor. My North African sketch book was amusing, but in no way resembled any need of the market place. Neither did my spots, scratchboard, or pen and ink sketches for the army newspaper. One agent I approached, a distinguished silver haired gent with an

"Bird Flight." ***Scientific American*** cover. Oil over gesso on panel.

Adolphe Menjou moustache, gave me a studio photograph of a well known actor, and told me to copy it and return by noon the next day. My copy lacked any evidence of the skills required. With the greatest kindness he told me to search for a job in the bull pen of some advertising studio.

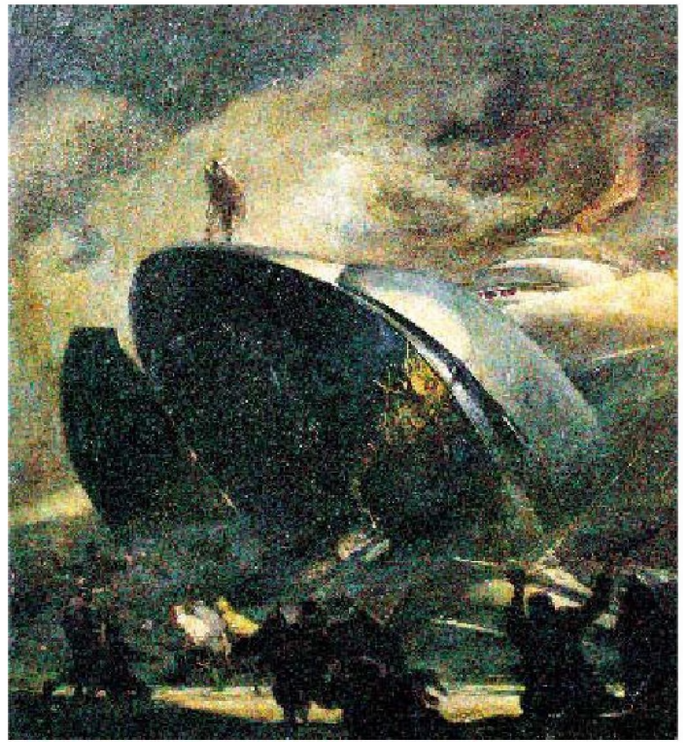
While sharpening my skills I did a number of life-size portraits and a number of complex pictures. *The Embarkation for the Wedding*, my wedding picture with Alice, was stolen from my studio and remains at large. Other large ones were *The Birth of Autumn*, and *The Destruction of the Myrtle Avenue El*. On turning 30, I realized that life was not quite over and that some pleasurable events might still happen. Botticelli's *Primavera*, the birth of spring with the bees and the flowers was designed to teach the Medici children the facts of life at the onset of their adolescence. *The Birth of Autumn* was my reply since I am the recumbent figure, surrounded by my friends and commenting on the good and bad effects of aging. I was teaching painting at Pratt in Brooklyn. I wanted to show students they did not have to run off to Tahiti to find subjects. All they needed to do was to look around themselves. On the street below a elevated transit line was being demolished. Men with jack hammers were demolishing the concrete pylons which supported the steel.

Since I was ignorant of what ad agencies and magazines desired, my first real work was in two new assignments in which no experience was required and no price too low. For these untried varieties of work, inexperience and fresh-

"The Green Hills of Earth." Paperback book cover. Oil over gesso on panel.

"Jimmy Avati painting a paperback cover." (Stanley Meltzoff seated in chair, Avati family, Rev. B. Goode.) Oil over gesso on panel.

ness were the virtues returning soldiers had. The first of these openings was the rebirth of *Scientific American*. Three science editors of the popular *Life* magazine saw that the venerable science periodical had degenerated into a trade sheet for iron foundries and a mild version of *Popular Mechanics*. Science had become news which had to be made understandable and interesting. The revived journal explained and expanded upon the astounding new physics and discoveries in all of the sciences. A schoolmate, Chester Kreiswirth, had worked for *Life* and became the art editor. He asked me to do their first cover. The new editor, Denis Flanagan, turned out to be an unsuspected second cousin. The commissions were not pure nepotism, since a wonderful magic realist, Walter Murch, was also asked to contribute. As I did more covers I came to understand that still-lives of experimental creatures and scientific objects were what the 16th Century artists would have called emblemata. The bizarre combination of scientific objects looked surrealist to modern eyes and contributed to the revival of interest in artists as diverse as Arcimboldo and the *vanitas* painters. I painted many covers for that magazine, but the *Scientific American* series ended abruptly after the sixty-fifth.



"Puppet Masters." Paperback book cover. Oil over gesso on panel.

United Engineers and Constructors, Inc. ad. Reprinted from August **Fortune**, 1959.

United Engineers and Constructors, Inc. ad. Reprinted from January **Fortune**, 1959.

United Engineers and Constructors, Inc. ad. Reprinted from October **Fortune**, 1959.

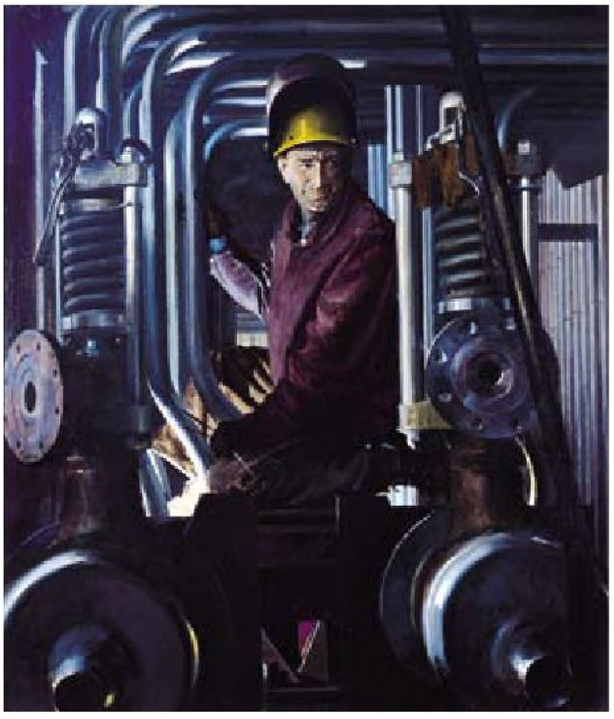
Another unexpected outlet for the inexperienced was the paperback cover. The combination of inexpensive four-color printing and a technique for laminating the covers against finger smudge made it practical to put pictures on the cover of small books for sale in every newsstand or bus stop. The best of English language fiction and non-fiction found a new market here and in Europe. Jimmy Avati got to do the earliest covers, but he was soon followed by other ancient and young unemployed picture makers willing to work for $300 a cover, including all expenses. The freshly hatched editors of the new publisher did not know what might encourage people to buy the works of Faulkner, Farrell, Caldwell, or Simenon. The only test was to put the unfamiliar authors with the new covers on the new display racks in new venues. When the cover was by Avati, sales soared to many millions. With another cover, many fewer books were sold. Avati's sympathy for his characters leaped out of the tiny rectangles and grasped attention, just as those of Norman Rockwell did on magazine covers. The novelists described life which was at the reverse side of the world of Norman Rockwell, and so the covers naturally resembled the social realist paintings done before the war in the '30s. That was exactly the school the returned veterans had left five years earlier. When I moved down to the Jersey Shore, I shared an old Masonic hall at the cross roads of Red Bank as a studio with Avati where we did our paperbacks. We both worked in oil by fortunate habit, since oil permitted a much richer equivalence of space, light, and the substance of things than renderings in gouache.

When New American Library decided to add science fiction to its list, they turned to me because I had been doing *Scientific American* covers. Since childhood I had read Dean Swift, Jules Verne, H.G. Wells and *Amazing Stories*, and I was a fan of Olaf Stapledon. That era of science fiction extrapolated the possibilities of science and led directly to real earth satellites and real astronauts on the moon. I guessed that the costumes of astronauts floating in space would resemble the insulation and air packs of diver-aquanauts, like myself, exploring the alien world underseas. To make it look real I placed African-Americans among the astronauts in colonies on the moon. The floating angels and terrifying demons in last judgments on duomo walls fitted the astronauts in the other worlds of science fiction. By accident of being there early I set a sort of pattern for later sci-fi illustrations. Despite doing paperbacks well enough, I went as fast as I could to higher paying and more respected types of work.

A chemical company in Philadelphia wished to introduce a new product—acrylic plastics—in the form of ion exchange resins. They advertised in *Scientific American* to catch the attention of high tech engineers, so they turned to me to invent the images. I painted myself as a huckster doing agit-prop for any merchandiser, but I was chosen for more general themes. Another corporation, United Engineers, which designed and constructed plants, decided to run monthly pages in *Fortune* magazine and gave me the choice of what to do. I transposed the reverence I had for the fighting troops to the heroism of high steel workers. I climbed as far up into the steel grid as I dared and I was impressed by the steel workers who balanced still higher. For the joy of it I did a portrait of a boilermaker, Ed Steinell, welding stainless steel exchange pipes in the guts of the

"Isabelle Stewart Gardner Opening Her Museum in Boston." ***Life Magazine***, Oil on canvas.

"Pharmacist's Balance." Rohm and Haas ad. Oil over gesso on panel.



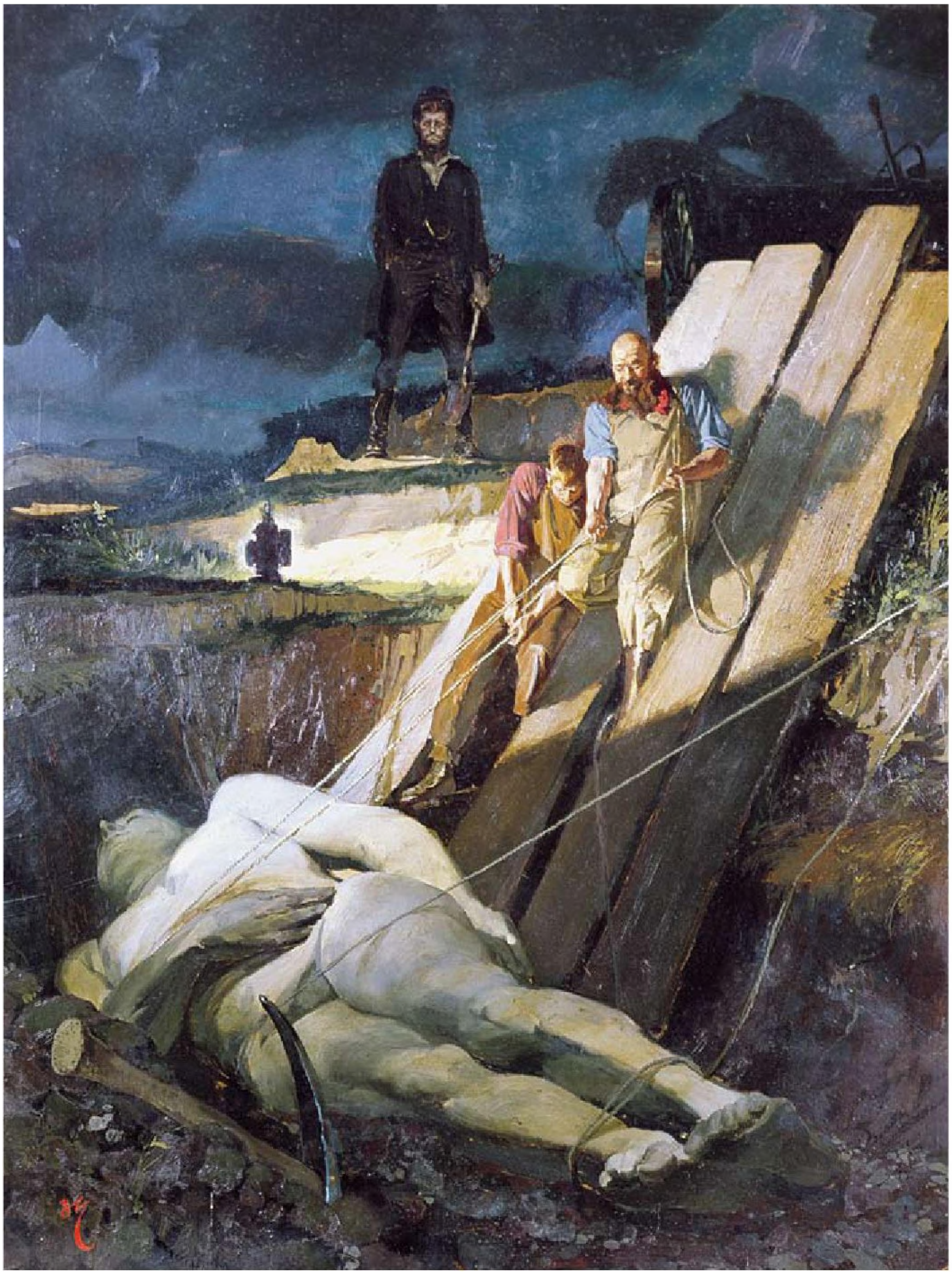
"Portrait of Boilermaker Ed Steinell." Oil on canvas.

"William Jennings Bryan, 'Cross of Gold' Speech, Democratic National Convention, July 9, 1896." ***Life Magazine***. Oil on canvas.

Stanley Meltzoff as huckster. Created for sample book. Gouache on board.

plant. Depicting the grunt work of moving mountains and controlling seas of poured concrete was a natural way for celebrating labor. An article by Ernest Watson about this series in *American Artist* was my first public notice as a picture maker. Twenty years earlier I had learned how to mass shadows and light from the lessons he wrote in that magazine. After doing 60 or so images of construction I resigned from the series. I suppose I might have continued doing ads for the rest of my life, but I turned to the better pay and respect given to illustrators of stories.

Quite without realizing when it happened I found that I was working for the big magazines: *Saturday Evening Post*, *Life*, and *National Geographic*. Instead of the flattened gouache style of Al Parker then in demand, I made large oil paintings of genre and historical subjects which involved many people in action in complex settings, illumination, and staffage in costume. I admired the Victorian masters of narrative painting from Frith to Lord Leighton and Alma-



"The Cardiff Giant," ***Argosy Magazine***. Oil on canvas.

"New Orleans Whorehouse." ***True Magazine.*** Oil on canvas mounted on board.

Tadema. Howard Pyle and Edwin Austin Abbey became my guides. Life asked me to do the Battle of Bull Run, the speech of William Jennings Bryan at a Democratic Convention, a picture history of the ancient Athenians, and Isabelle Stewart Gardner opening her museum in Boston. *National Geographic* gave me a similar set of historical constructions. For the *Saturday Evening Post*, besides inside stories, I made one of their recurrent covers of Benjamin Franklin. For *Argosy*, *True*, *Saga*, and *Field and Stream*, I did the sporting life of men and animals.

With the fee for one *Life* series I paid off my mortgage and began to feel secure. The climax of this happy period was when AT&T decided to do a single telephone book cover throughout the United States. An old friend, the art director Tom Ruzicka, asked me and others to submit ideas. I suggested a familiar device, once used earlier by Norman Rockwell, of heads talking to each other in a chain of conversations. These heads were to be the mythical archetypes of America and the specific phones used would trace the history of telephony. I suggested that Norman Rockwell do the job and, if not him, Andrew Wyeth. Both refused, so with Rockwell's signed consent, I accepted.

After a few years, the roof caved in. *Life* and the *Saturday Evening Post* expired; *Scientific American* no longer asked me to make their covers. Illustrations made by hand gave way to sound and color videos of places, events, species and his-

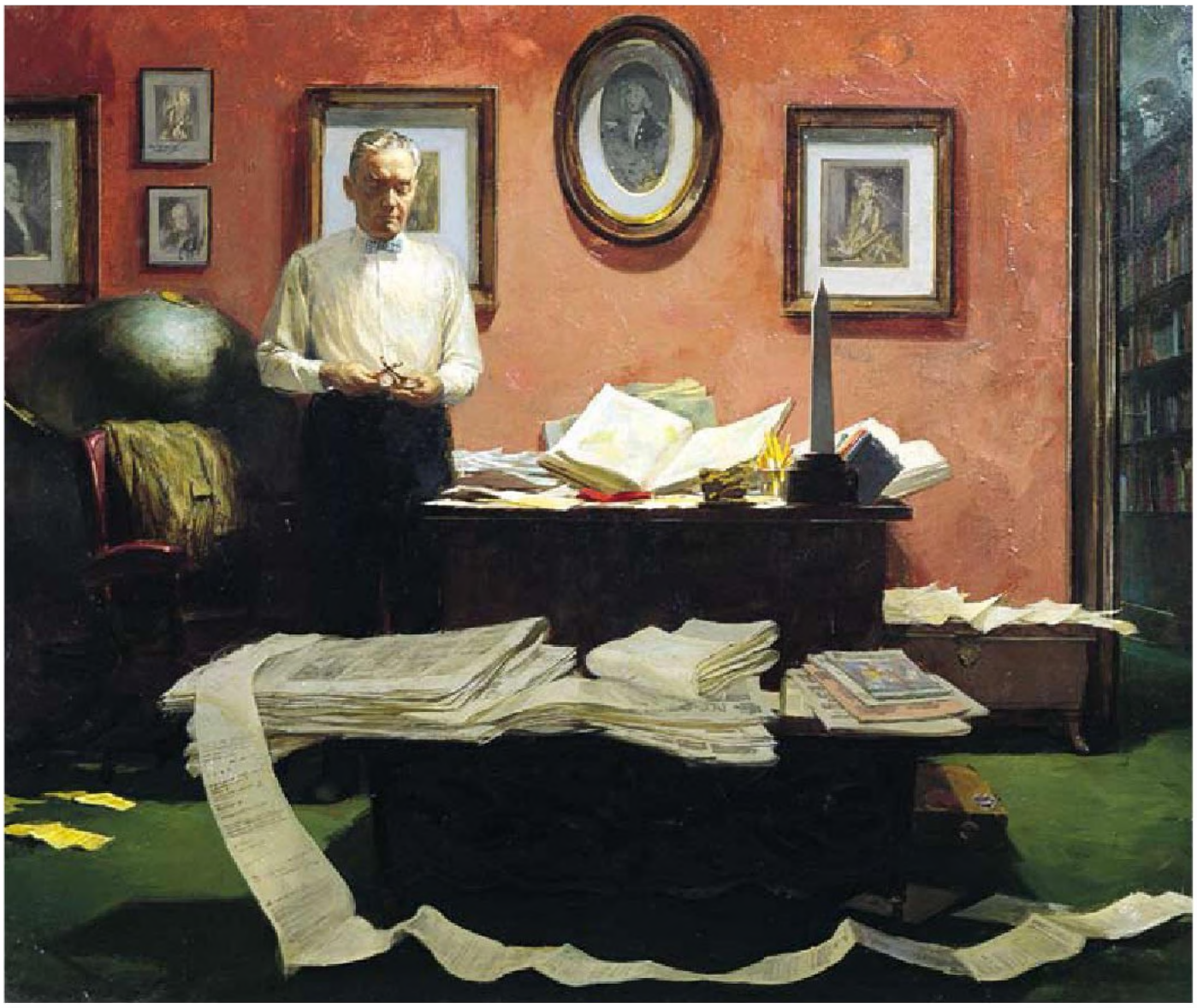
tories. Computer manipulated photos replaced the artist working from models or photographs. Not only picture making by hand diminished. A generation of star photographers like Robert Capa was replaced by television and video teams covering events. *National Geographic*, with their magnificent expense accounts, paid very little for the laboriously finished pictures. The technology of picture making had changed the rules, instruments and possiblities for picture makers.

My wife was ill, my children needed college money, and I was almost 60 years old. I stood on the corner of 56th St. and Lexington Avenue in the rain with a soggy portfolio in my hands and improvised a sad little song about defeat, flat feet and flat broke while I tried to think of something to do. A picture maker for reproduction, such as an illustrator, depends on the media available. What would Norman Rockwell have accomplished without four-color printing in mass periodicals? The media for which I had learned to work had dissolved and I had to refashion my skills.

The diving season in early spring was approaching and I was happier to think about fish underwater. For my own studio walls I had once made a picture of striped bass at the tip of Manasquan inlet where I had speared a 65 lb. bass. I thought I might go to *Field & Stream* and offer to do a series of pictures of striped bass underwater. No one had ever done such a thing before and the editor laughed me out of the office. I went to *Sports Illustrated* where the new art editor, Dick Gangel, had known me when he had been a junior at *Life*. Gangel was the wisest art director I have ever met. He told me to make as many pictures of striped bass as I desired, rough or finished. From the portfolio he would choose what he wished to print. No matter how many or how few he used I would get a flat fee for the series. Having dived with striped bass for 25 years from Hatteras to Cape Cod and from April to December, I decided to illustrate their 12 month cycle.

My fish were popular with readers and editors of *Sports Illustrated* and I was later asked to do another series on bluefish, and then tarpon, bonefish, bluefin tuna, sailfish, and blue marlin. I covered sailfish tournaments in Palm Beach and blue marlin fishing in St.Thomas. Steve Sloan, an IGFA trustee, showed me how to get on with big game fisherman, where to find the billfish, and where to find the most likely collectors of paintings. To my pleasure, I was having all expenses paid to dive in exotic, virgin waters,

AT&T National Bicentennial Phone Book Cover. 1976. Oil on canvas mounted on board.



"Portrait of Nat." Oil on canvas.

in order to make pictures of what I knew. The originals were mine to keep. Tom Lenk of Garcia Corporation bought the entire set of striped bass and all the later sets for use as corporate display. The originals sold for more than the magazine fees for the rights of reproduction. A decade later, to my sorrow, Garcia Corp. went bankrupt and all of the hundred or so fish paintings of mine in their possession were put up for sale in Chancery court in Boston. I bid 10 cents on the dollar of their original price and, suddenly, I had that indispensable necessity for a self-employed picture maker—an inventory. Fred King at Sportsman's Edge Gallery, then the only such gallery in the country, was persuaded to show the lot and sold many at the opening. I did not have to wait hungrily for the next freelance assignment. I began to believe that I could now pick my own subjects and paint them in my own time.

Japanese entrepreneurs had begun to finance tuna ranching in St. Margaret's Bay in Nova Scotia. In the few years their operation lasted I could dive all summer in 60 meter diameter nets impounding bluefin in 20 fathoms of cold clear water. I went to *National Geographic* no longer as an illustrator of the history of Puerto Rico or Roman Naval warfare, but with my own story. I persuaded them to let me do bluefin tuna. I had become a fish-painter, but others soon followed so that now there are perhaps 30 in the swim. I set out to travel on my own around the world to see all of the billfish and marlin alive in the water. It took a year for me to dive my way around the seas, but the published article paid back some of the expenses and the sale of pictures made me solvent again.

Creatures floating freely in blue space underseas were my way of paying tribute to allegorical divinities floating in the blue Venetian sky of Tiepolo. The greatest catch I made while diving was on a mother ship in Fiji where I met my second wife, Diane, now the premier diver in our family.

Somehow I retained my other identities, specially those of how to think about making pictures. When I first came down to the Jersey Shore my late first wife, Alice, was a

Meltzoff's very first fish painting: "Stripers at tip of Manasquan Inlet." 1964. Oil on canvas mounted on board.

member of the ladies auxiliary at the State Insane Asylum at Marlboro. For their entertainment I was asked to speak to her group. I tried to work out for them and myself the relation between psychiatric symptoms and the rhetorical devices of the symptoms of madness used in making pictures. In turn, mentally ill people were able to use the styles and modes of picture-making as a way to express what was hitherto inexpressible. Channels of meaning were opened up between the truly ill and the work of painters and poets. That was the root of another notion, which came to me with great force as I was delivering what turned out to be the last of my covers for *Scientific American*. I saw that my work as an illustrator was really the work of what the ancients called a rhetor, that is, someone who puts into words, imagery, costume, and gesture the ideas of someone else. An illustrator or a designer or art director puts into

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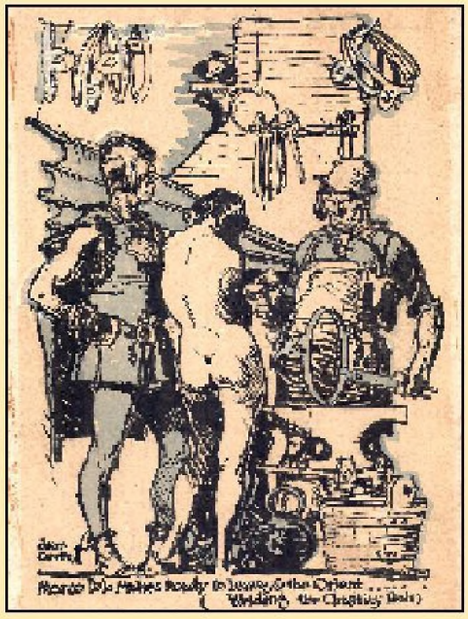

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Dean Cornwell. Original art for the 1927 Dutch Treat Club Yearbook.

"Diver's Farewell to Blue Marlin." Oil on canvas mounted on board.

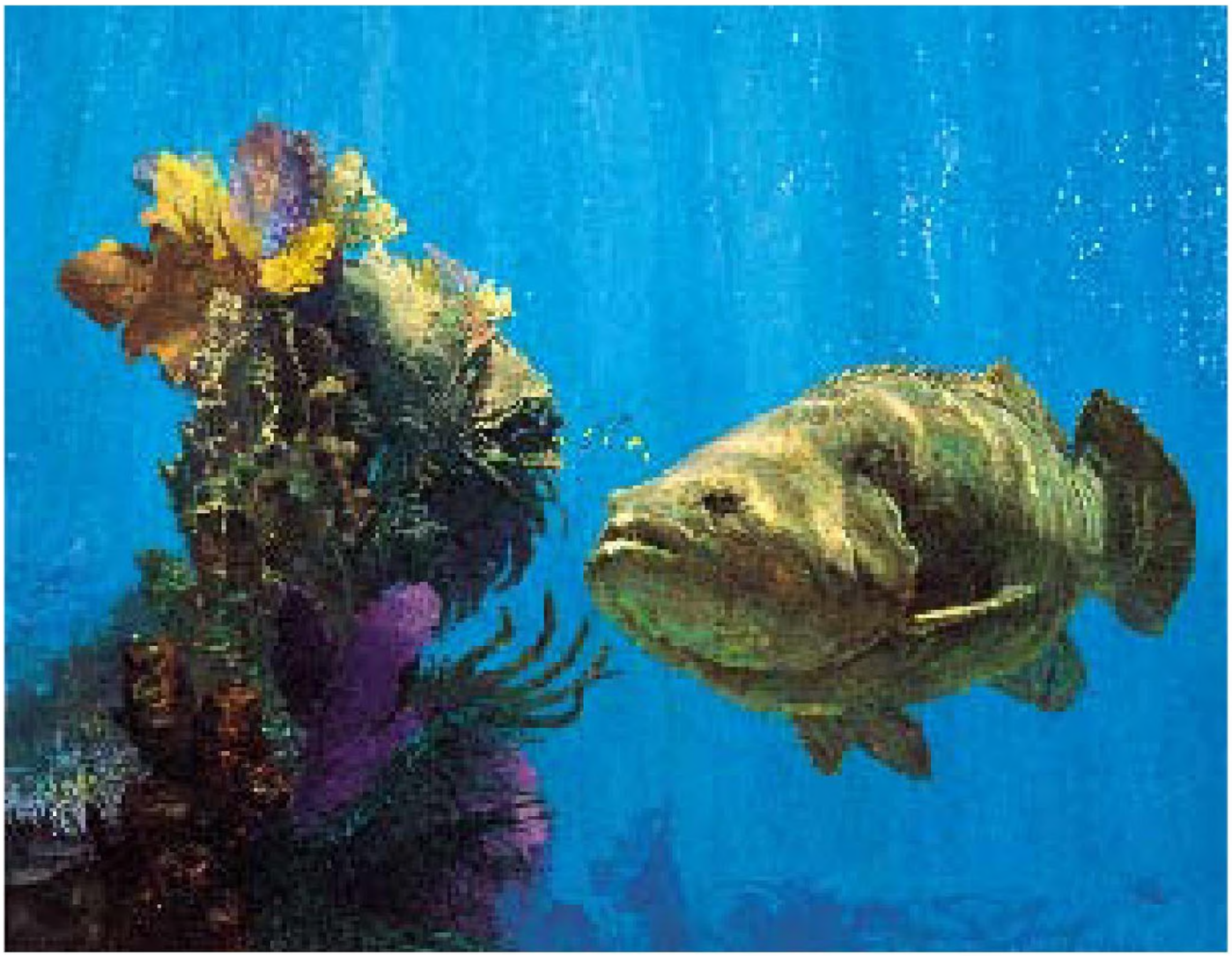
visual images what someone else wishes to convey. The choice of a viewpoint in perspective—or the use of coarse brushwork as the embodiment of gesture—can have as many meanings as the maker desires or the beholder intuits, but each is a well-used visual rhetorical form. I published some articles in learned journals and then decided to do a longer work on visual rhetorics. As an example of the use of rhetorical figures in painting I chose Botticelli's *Calumny of Apelles* and was able to unravel its complex iconography. That first chapter alone survived as a book: *Botticelli, Signorelli and Savanorola, theologia poetica from Boccaccio to Poliziano*. I had hoped to establish my qualifications to introduce the new field of visual rhetorics with this book. It won the Eric Mitchell prize for art history in 1989, but I did not manage to get the rest published. The true reward was the long and intimate friendship of Ernst Gombrich. When he read the later text of *Illusions of a Fish-painter*, the collection of my work in those waters (still unpublished), he asked me to collaborate with him on another ambitious project, representation as visual equivalence. That work also has not found its publisher. Never mind, I had found a friend who appreciated the particularity of events from which the history of art is composed.

By another odd chance I founded and collected my private museum of the technological artifacts of the fine arts. One winter day I huddled into the small harbor-side museum in

"Swordfish, Mako and Squid." Oil on canvas mounted on board.

"Striped Bass at Anchor." Oil on canvas mounted on board.

"Orca and Bluefin Tuna." Oil on canvas mounted on board.



"Secrets of Arcimboldo's Reef." Oil on canvas mounted on board.

Calais where there was a group of pictures of the Normandy coast by Boudin, as well as his actual palette. I was struck by the demonstration that the nature of an artist might be described by looking at his palette, color mixes, and brushes. I found and made a set of real, imaginary, ideal objects describing the artists, including myself, as I saw fit. My *Reliquarium*, as I called it, was published in part in *Smithsonian*.

As I look back, it is evident that the path of the gallery artist would have been more rewarding for any illustrator fortunate enough to be as clever as Rheinhardt, Newman, Warhol, or Lichtenstein. Yet, even if I had been witty enough to figure skate over the surface of the arts, I would not have experienced and depicted the real world beneath the surface of the seas, on construction sites, or in the labyrinth of the sciences. It may be that working as a picture maker saved me from the abstraction and solipsism which dominated the High Art of my time. ●

© 2002 by Stanley Meltzoff

Seurat's palette, from Meltzoff's *Reliquarium*.
Photograph by Henry Groskinsky.

Stanley Meltzoff was born March 27, 1917 in New York City. He attended Townsend Harris, City College of New York (B.S.), New York University Institute of Fine Arts (M.F.A.), and was a member of the Art Student's League. During World War II, Meltzoff served in Africa and Italy and was an art editor of *Stars & Stripes*. In addition to his career as an illustrator, he taught art history and practice at City College of New York and at Pratt Institute. The winner of many Society of Illustrator Awards, his clients have included *The Saturday Evening Post, Fortune, Life, Sports Illustrated, The National Geographic, True* and *Field and Stream*. For *Scientific American* alone he created over sixty cover illustrations. He was elected to the Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame in 1999. He currently resides in Fair Haven, New Jersey.

Book Reviews

B. Krigstein Volume One (1919 - 1955)
By Greg Sadowski
Fantagraphics Books
$49.95 hardcover

As the title suggests, this lavish full-color biography traces comic book innovator Bernard Krigstein's life and career leading up to his eventual break with the medium following the tumultuous comic code period. The story is told through copious, uniformly excellent illustrations culled from numerous original art and printed sources, including five complete stories newly re-colored by Marie Severin. Greg Sadowski makes great use of his full access to the Krigstein archives (art, personal letters, interviews and artist statements) as well as extensive interviews with both the artist's wife Natalie Krigstein, who contributes a foreword, and former comic book industry colleagues. In total, this first of two volumes represents perhaps the most comprehensive and thorough treatment ever given to a comic book artist.

The first few chapters chronicle Krigstein's education and World War II military service. From a young age Krigstein was committed to traditional high art ideals and his early line work and leftist social commentary (resembling the work of Ben Shahn and early Philip Guston) provide a view of advanced figurative tendencies in Depression and WPA-era New York City's gallery and commercial art worlds. Krigstein's mature angular line quality is predicted in the more modulated contours and hatching of his student work; even more apparent is the artist's analytical breakdown of form and convention within traditional subject matter. Krigstein entered the world of comic books and the attendant factory system of the 1940s reluctantly (initially viewing the field as a mere commercial end), but by the latter part of the decade he embraced the expressive potential of the form, determined to utilize and invigorate its lowly status: "The only thing challenging about it, and the only thing marvelous about it, is that it's a popular form. And it's a very contradictory notion, but that's where the whole problem lies–it's so popular. It's so popular that it doesn't have artistic respect." (78) In fact, the effort to infuse commercial production (ultimately a collaborative process with which Krigstein was perpetually uncomfortable) with period classical art values can be said to characterize all of the artist's comic work.

Thankfully, the bulk of this volume is comprised of the height of Krigstein's comic book production from the late 40s to mid-50s, in which Sadowski deftly demonstrates the artist's rapidly shifting formal and conceptual experiments. This period is absolutely astonishing in terms of creative invention. With very few exceptions (resulting primarily from time constraints), virtually every assignment shows the artist attempting radical solutions to invigorate story lines. Plots, paper thin in many instances, provide the springboard for seemingly endless overt and subtle variation: specifically, Krigstein's tinkering with panel rhythm to suitably reflect and enhance narrative time and tone (ongoing concerns) through the use of broad swaths of black, line density and large, contrasting open areas for color, bordering on abstraction. When presented in the context of earlier and later work in a variety of mediums, the spiky hallmark style associated with Krigstein's most well-known and reproduced comic work during this period is confirmed as his highest achievement (it goes without saying that any understanding of Krigstein is necessarily based upon the efforts of earlier comic scholars, and Sadowski does an admirable job of meticulously crediting these pioneers).

Throughout the book, Krigstein's statements on the nature of comic book format storytelling reveal the artist to be among the most eloquent theoreticians of the medium. When confronted with his EC editor Harvey Kurtzman's fixed views on layout and structure, Krigstein demonstrates a keen awareness of the limitations of basing one's approach to the static form on underlying comparisons to film (still overly relied upon to this day):

> I didn't want a picture version of time, where the camera is going closer. That is not comics and that is not pictures, because pictures do not relate to one another in that way. I wanted each panel to be a *separate* picture, and I didn't want the repeating panels to blend together like a film. Because... comics are not a motion-picture. (171-72)

This statement illustrates Krigstein's influence on a current generation of cartoonists: the unique qualities of the form reside in the dynamic between sequence and single iconic image, not the unselfconscious, (for him) dead-end mimicking of codified techniques from other mediums. In fact, while Kurtzman's achievement is undeniable, Krigstein would have greatly benefited from writing his own work, no doubt attaining a more personal, unified (and less "shop") approach to form and content, such as that realized by underground cartoonists a decade later.

Ultimately, Sadowski provides an informative and even-handed treatment of Krigstein's personal and professional life (the despair over the death of his child, perpetual conflicts with editors, attempts to unionize the comics profession in order to achieve greater job security and page rates), while giving a broader picture of other approaches to comics and the economic and social situation of the industry during this period. The unfolding narrative takes on an exciting pace, particularly in the description of Krigstein's efforts during the mid-50s.

While the text is outstanding, the most immediately impressive aspect of the book is its design and production. Sadowski is a freelance graphic designer and his graceful, understated layouts are a model for reconciling subject and

design, pulling the reader in and elegantly complementing the subject matter rather than bombarding with a garish conceptual aping of it. The dust jacket alone is a sight to behold, making apparent that the intent and intelligence of the project are miles beyond the crude, casual-interest coffee-table compendium.

The fact that Krigstein shifted back and forth between mediums of differing cultural status begs one to question the view (voiced as much from within the critical comics community as outside it) that the highest accolade bestowed upon pinnacle achievements within the comic form is that the work, or its practitioner, "transcends" the inherent limitations of the humble medium. Certainly it is apparent through Krigstein's letters that he placed a premium on "real" art and frowned upon facile trickery, ever suspicious of the signature style of "mere" illustrators (the book opens with a quote by comic scholar Bhob Stewart emphasizing such division). In truth, Krigstein's comic work of the 1950s defines a time period and stands out as some of the most impressive artwork in any medium, simultaneously grappling with the past while looking forward. At his most innovative, the artist's reductive style and analytic approach reward endless rereading, and there is no need for such sophisticated work to be justified as transcending its medium; as Krigstein came to believe, the format was, and certainly is now, fluid enough to encompass every range of formal and conceptual possibility, even within genre constraints and regulated by the economic necessity of quick turnaround. Within comics, Krigstein's true subject matter was the form itself, bending and exploiting its narrative and visual conventions to fit his expressive needs. That the medium, which inspired such staggering heights of creativity, ultimately left the artist no more options represents a major loss.

Krigstein attempted to raise the stakes for an entire industry by injecting a level of theoretical awareness (which in his mind went hand in hand with higher economic and organizational standards) and this book admirably spotlights his achievements. I am grateful for Sadowski's fair treatment of Krigstein's work. The masterful comic book output is not presented as a prelude or addendum to, it must be admitted, decidedly more mediocre painting (or vice-versa) as is often the case when artists of this generation themselves choose to present their life's work (due to shifting economic viability or the related desire to move on to more culturally valued modes of production, the great practitioners of pulp and paperback cover and comic art seem almost universally to create somewhat bland contributions to gallery painting later in life, "outdoor" subjects seemingly the most popular). There is no denying that Krigstein's ultimate artistic contribution is as a comic artist, but the fact that Sadowski does not attempt to academically pigeonhole aspects of his career as illustrations of a theory of progress or subservience is refreshing.

Sadowski does an excellent job in all aspects of this study and, while eagerly awaiting the second volume, I maintain hope that this endeavor represents a viable future for such expertly produced comic and illustration scholarship. ●

— M. Todd Hignite

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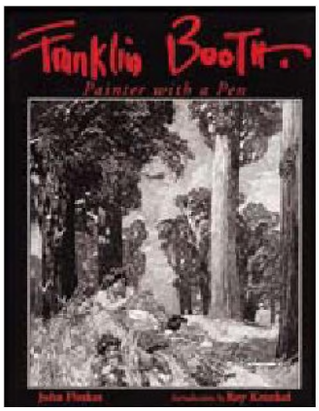


Franklin Booth – Painter with a Pen
By John Fleskes. Introduction by Roy Krenkel. Foreword by Walt Reed

Flesk Publications
$39.95 hardcover

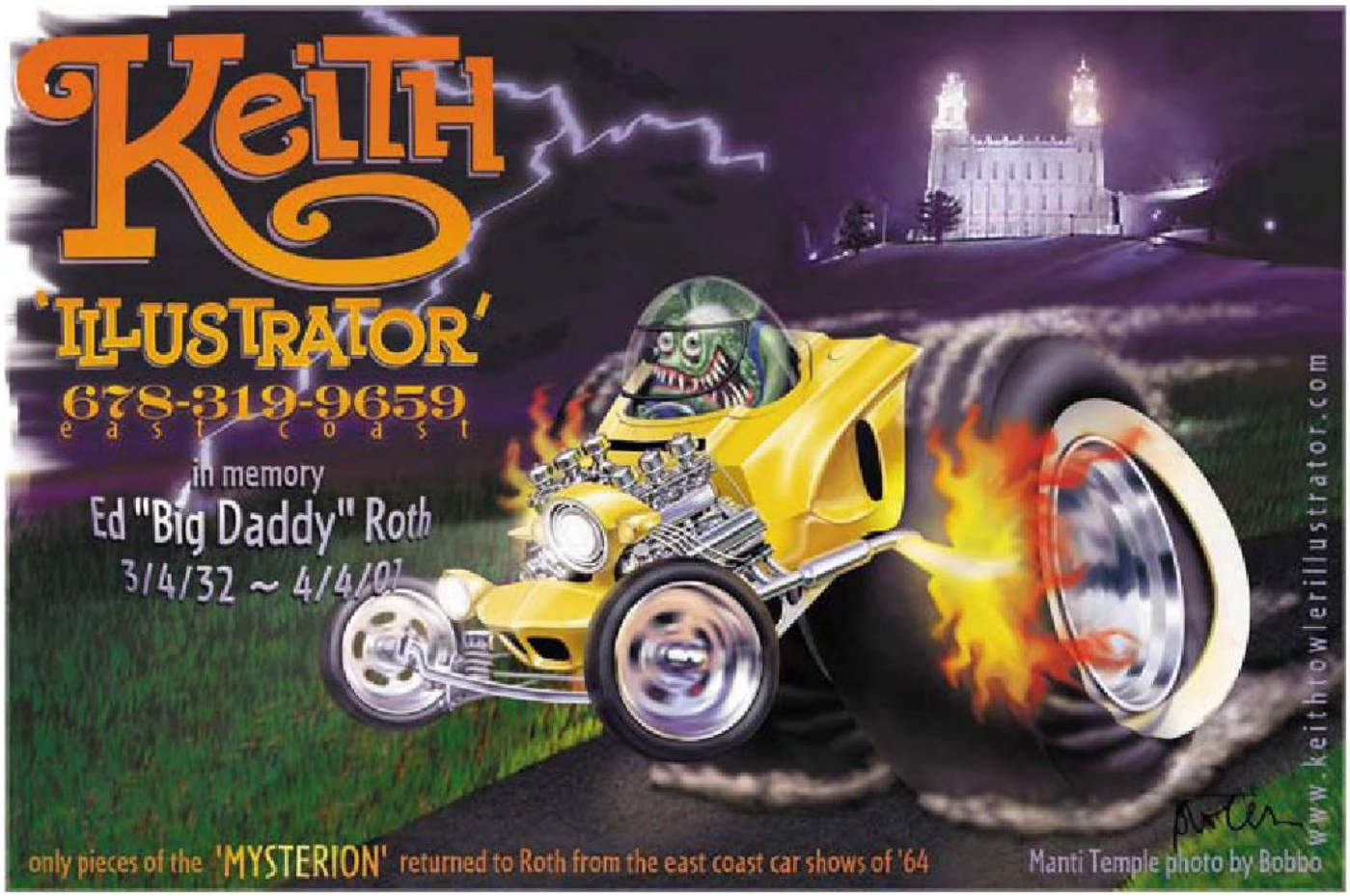
Anyone who has worked with scratchboard or pen and ink drawing seems to be familiar with the work of Franklin Booth, one of the greatest masters of pen and ink illustration of the 20th century. Though books on his work have been scarce (original editions running into the many hundreds of dollars) somehow we've all run across his work at one time or another. His lyrical and mysterious drawings of towering black trees, billowing clouds and soaring architecture have been seen in numerous anthologies, from Joseph Pennell's classic *Pen Drawing and Pen Draughtsmanship* to Arthur L. Guptill's *Drawing with Pen and Ink.* Finally, fans of Booth's intricate linework can rejoice with the publication of this grand new collection of his drawings.

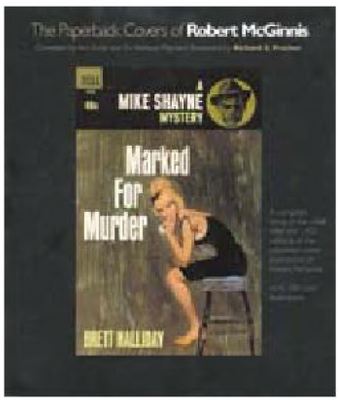
Franklin Booth - Painter with a Pen is the first new collection of Booth's pen and ink work since *Franklin Booth: 60 Drawings* was issued in 1925 (and reprinted in 1978 by Nostalgia Press as *The Art of Franklin Booth.*) This beautiful new volume is a long overdue addition to the Booth oeuvre, and contains over 180 pen and ink illustrations (most not seen for over 75 years) reproduced with remarkable fidelity on quality paper stock.

Considering that Booth's influence on the world of illustration has been profound, with elements of his style and technique to be found in the work of such varied contemporary illustrators as Bernie Wrightson, Mark Summers, Chris Van Allsburg, Roy G. Krenkel and Barry Moser, it is almost hard to believe that it has taken this long for a new book to appear. But John Fleskes has taken the bull by the horns and has collected together a spectacular group of drawings, culled from the pages of original source material such as *Elks Magazine, Cosmopolitan, Harper's Magazine, The Ladies Home Journal, Redbook, Pictorial Review, The Saturday Evening Post, Scribner's Magazine,* advertisements for Estey Organ Company, and the pages of numerous other publications from 1902 to 1923. As mentioned earlier, the printing and reproduction quality is first rate, and you would think that most of these pictures were reproduced from the original art. I cannot recommend this book highly enough, and I would encourage everyone to place an order as quickly as you can before it sells out. This is an essential work that should be on the bookshelf of everyone who reads this magazine. ●

— Dan Zimmer

For more information, please visit John Fleskes' website: www.fleskpublications.com. *This book may also be ordered through Bud Plant Books at* www.budplant.com.





The Paperback Covers of Robert McGinnis
Compiled by Art Scott and Dr. Wallace Maynard
Foreword by Richard S. Prather

Pond Press
$29.95 softcover

Visit any second-hand bookstore, and go to just about any section you like (romance, mystery, westerns.) There you are certain to find dozens (if not hundreds) of covers by Robert McGinnis, one of the most prolific and talented artists to ever work in the paperback field. (And if you're not looking at a McGinnis, you are probably looking at a cover by one of his scores of imitators.) His first covers appeared in 1958, and since then, McGinnis has crafted an inimitable style that has secured him work from every major publisher, in all genres, and a place in the Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame (1993.)

His most famous works are his iconic movie poster images for *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and the James Bond films. But for those of us in the know, it is his portraits of sexy, smart, sophisticated femme fatales that secure his reputation as one of the absolute greats in the field of illustration. Ever elegant and always razor sharp, his graceful feminine creations populate a noir world full of wonderful antique props and lean, hungry tough guys (many of whom seem to look suspiciously like James Coburn.) Like Charles Dana Gibson, George Petty or Alberto Vargas before him, McGinnis' women redefined the look of their generation with a worldly, cool, and leggy sophistication.

This wonderful new book is a model of how to assemble a checklist and guide for paperback collectors. Packed with over 250 covers, scores of reproductions of original art, preliminary sketches and photos of models, this is the ultimate collector's guide to McGinnis' paperbacks. Every book (1068 of them!) is listed, and many covers are shown in large size, with full color reproductions. Compiled over the course of many years, this book is the first definitive bilbliography of the artist's work, and was created with McGinnis' full cooperation. (As many of the paperacks were unsigned, having his help on this project was almost certainly essential.)

I was thrilled to receive this book, and it is beautifully designed and printed. The reproduction quality could not be better, and the fact that there are page after page of full color reproductions makes this book a sumptuous feast for the eyes. The other recent book on McGinnis, *Tapestry,* is very different from this one, and there is very little overlap between the two (which were produced by entirely different publishers.) Both of these books function well as companion volumes, and you will certainly want them both. ●

— Dan Zimmer

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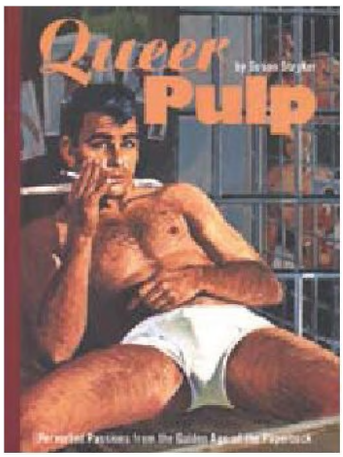

Queer Pulp
By Susan Stryker
Chronicle Books
$19.95 softcover

As readers of this magazine know, we are crazy about paperbacks and paperback art, so any new book devoted to the subject is met with enthusiasm. Susan Stryker's fascinating new book is no exception, and it examines territory that none of the previous books on paperback history have explored... the world of the gay and lesbian paperback.

Strange Sisters by Jaye Zimet (Viking Studio, 1999) made a stab at the lesbian side of things a few years ago, but that volume was more a picture book than a serious study of the genre. And of course the male equation was ignored entirely. *Queer Pulp: Perverted Passions from the Golden Age of the Paperback* travels down a different road, and details the rise of queer paperback fiction within a broader social and cultural context. There is a rich history here, and Stryker digs deep to trace the roots of this paperback genre and to examine in detail the social and economic factors that produced a boom in queer paperbacks from the 1940s to the 1960s.

The Golden Age of the paperbacks, from 1939 to the mid-50s, created an entirely new medium that reached millions of readers. As the mass market for paperbacks exploded through the 1940s and 50s, publishers of paperback books, as the pulp publishers before them, pushed the envelope (and limits of decency) with ever-more provocative offerings meant to entice every level of readership into buying their wares. Before the explosion of soft and hard-core pornography in magazines of the 1960s, the paperbacks were the only game in town when it came to explicit portrayals of sexuality in the mass media, and the publishers found a public eager to receive their increasingly racy product. Swamp-dwelling incestuous hillbillies, lesbian girl gangs, and suburban wife swappers were all fair game for subject matter, and it is not surprising that the publishers would turn their attentions to the increasingly visible alternative lifestyles of the gay and lesbian communities to find new material.

Homosexuality had attained a new level of visibility in the years following World War II. Alfred Kinsey's 1948 *Report of Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* swept aside an older era's conventional assumptions about the heterosexual norm, and by helping to establish the sheer fact of sexual diversity in the public's consciousness, the report ultimately helped to pave the way for the sexual revolution of the 1960s. The introduction of some of these revolutionary new ideas into the realm of the mass market paperbacks allowed visions of alternative sexualities to permeate the public imagination like no other medium up to that time. Audiences familiar with standard crime and mystery fiction and commonplace plot lines began

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"Agatha", 1978
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Don Daily
Sam Norkin
Ted CoConis
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C. Michael Dudash
Kazuhiko Sano
Bart Forbes
Sandy Kossin
Herb Tauss
Barney Plotkin
Bernie Fuchs
David Grove
Mitchell Hooks
Joel Iskowitz
Birney Lettick
Robert Risko
Ann Meisel
John Solie
Daniel Schwartz
...And Others

to be introduced to unfamiliar new characters, who would pop up unexpectedly with fully formed patterns of behavior that were decidedly out on the fringes of "normal" society.

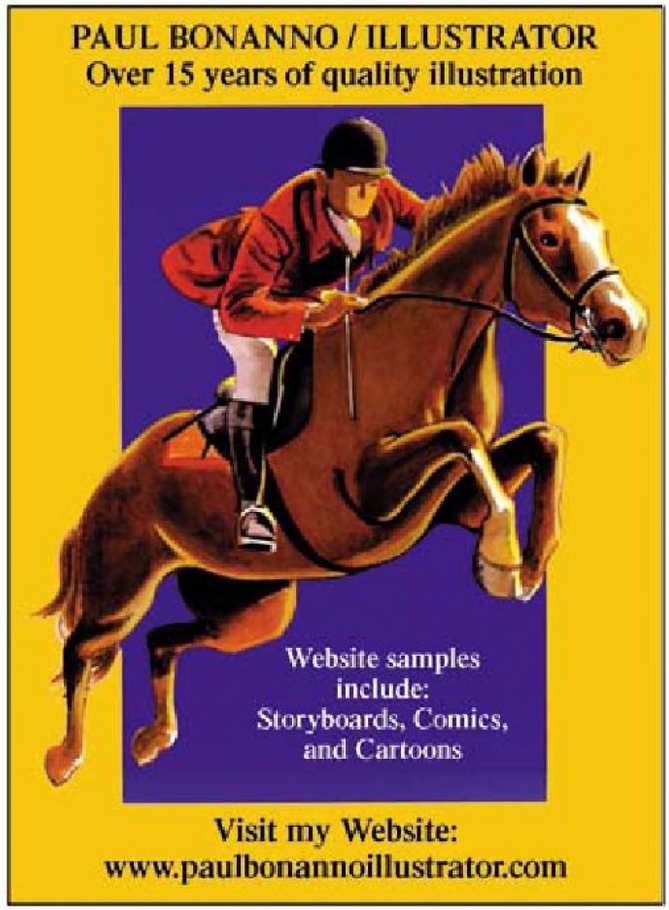
The rapidly maturing genre of science fiction, where any subject could be discussed under the guise of futuristic fantasy, was one area in which gender issues could be freely explored and taken seriously. The field offered abundant opportunities to express variant attitudes about sexuality and gender, and was well suited to promote visions of alternative societies. Authors such as Frank Long could raise fascinating questions about beings who fall outside the binary heterosexual gender system, as in his *Woman from Another Planet*, and Theodore Sturgeon could write about a future utopia that has deliberately eliminated sexual difference, in his *Venus Plus X*.

While most of the books in these genres were lowbrow and could be considered pure exploitation, many of them gave a voice to writers whose ideas and lives could find little expression in the dominant heterosexual culture. Among these voices we find a surprising array of respectable authors, whose works were published in lurid paperback forms prior to their later mainstream success. Truman Capote's *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, Patricia Highsmith's *The Price Of Salt* (published under the pseudonym Claire Morgan), authors such as W. Somerset Maugham, Charles Jackson, Robert McAlmon, Paul Bowles, James Baldwin, Samuel R. Delany and Gore Vidal were all published in the pulp ghetto before their books were canonized as literature.

Aside from these outstanding examples, the majority of queer novels were marketed to a paranoid general public as "cautionary tales" and carried such ludicrous and provocative titles as *The Man They Called My Wife. Hot Pants Homo, Mr. Ballerina, Lavender Love Rumble. So Soft, So Sweet, So Queer, Killer in Drag, AC-DC Stud* and *Muscle Boy* (the story of "Beefcake Kings who get their kicks from forbidden feats of strength.") These books were mostly exercises in soft-porn, and rarely contained anything that would be considered literature, but the lurid cover art is what shines here, and one of the great strengths of this book is the fantastic variety of images used by Stryker to further her discussions of the various elements of the queer genres (broken down into sections concerning bisexuality, lesbianism, transgenderism and male homosexuality.)

As with all other Chronicle Books, the design and reproduction quality in this book is excellent, and each section of the book is generously illustrated with dozens of vintage paperback covers. Classics like *The Man From C.A.M.P., Women's Barracks* and *Lesbo Lodge* have been available as refrigerator magnets, postcards and greeting cards for some time, and certainly there are many images here that we have seen elsewhere, but this book presents many new covers that I have never seen reproduced before and that is always a refreshing surprise. Cover illustrators are rarely mentioned (most covers were unsigned and anonymous), but publication data for each book is included. ●

— *Dan Zimmer*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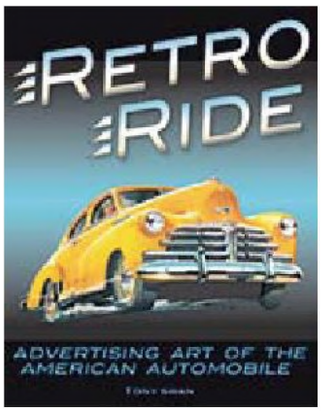

RETRO RIDE: ADVERTISING ART OF THE AMERICAN AUTOMOBILE
by Tony Swan
Collectors Press,
$29.95

There have been a number of lavish new art books released recently which each reproduce hundreds of vintage ads culled from the pages of magazines published from the 1940s through the 1970s. (Taschen's monumental collections of advertising art immediately spring to mind.) While I applaud the release of these books, and enjoy seeing all of this great imagery conveniently gathered into one place, I still wish that these publishers would go the extra mile and include some sort of historical perspective, or in fact, any sort of explanatory text at all. In most cases, the ads are merely gathered together into chronological order and presented as-is.

Retro Ride is unfortunately another such picture book. The brief introduction by Tony Swan (who has held numerous editorial positions with prominent auto magazines such as *Cycle World, Sports Car Graphic, Motor Trend,* and *Popular Mechanics*) is nice filler, but ultimately we are left with a lot of questions about this advertising art. The men who created these illustrations were remarkable craftsmen, and their paintings are all little jewels of perfected technique... Who were they? It is a shame that we don't learn the names of any of these great artists, or find out about the studios that existed to create all of this fantastic work.

I suppose that the purpose of this magazine is to pick up where these publishers leave off, and document the missing pieces of the puzzle. (If anyone knows any old automotive advertising artists, tell them to give me a call.) But it is still irksome that publishers are rushing these books to print and not giving much thought to adding anything to the history of the field.

That being said, *Retro Ride* is a beautiful new picture book filled to the brim with fantastic reproductions of gorgeous automotive advertising art. The color is rich and vibrant, the design is perfect, and for anyone who is wild about vintage automobiles, (or for those who collect them!) this book is a dream catalog. (I've already picked out my next ride... A '56 Studebaker Hawk.)

These old ads are a constant source of inspiration, and the illustrations jump off the page with an immediacy that the lifeless computer retouched product photos of today cannot hope to touch. ●

— Dan Zimmer

RUTKA
Harvey Dunn
Oil on canvas; 40" x 26"; 1923
Hearst International Magazine

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Grant Reynard

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THE VADEBONCOEUR COLLECTION OF IMAGES, #4

Jim Vadeboncoeur, Jr.
$20.00, 36 pages

Lots of people have been asking me what I think of Jim Vadeboncoeur's *Images* magazine, and for the longest time I've wanted to run a review of it in this magazine. For various reasons (space) I've never been able to get around to it. Until now.

I think *Images* is a wonderful magazine, and that Jim is doing a great service for fans of turn-of-the-century illustration art. As most of the work featured in the magazine is not likely to be reprinted anywhere else, *Images* becomes the only place where you can see any of this material. And considering that you would have to be a millionaire to be able to afford all of the original books and magazines that Jim draws his content from (his personal collection gathered over more than 30 years) the rather exorbitant price-tag of the magazine seems like a relative bargain.

The main flaw with *Images*, if it can be considered a flaw at all, is that it is not really a "magazine" per se, but is indeed a "collection of images" as stated on the cover. There is some text in each issue, but it is very minimal. There are no stories or artist's biographies. *Images* sticks to... the images, which are printed in full color at a large format page size of 9 x 12 inches, on high quality paper stock. While at first I thought this was a terrible idea, I've since grown accustomed to the lack of text, and I don't mind at all. There isn't a lot of good biographical material around about most of these obscure artists, so why bother trying to fill space with stories? The main thing here is the art, so why not just get to it?

The reproduction quality is good overall, but I don't agree that the illustrations look as good as the original source material they are drawn from. A lot of turn-of-the-century printing is just beautiful, and unfortunately some of the images in *Images* fall short. While Jim does an admirable job with most of the pictures, I think that a lot of them are muddy and blurred by poor Photoshop manipulation techniques. A judicious use of CMYK curves would also be helpful to eliminate some of the ugly color casts caused by the scanner. But enough techno-babble.

I honestly don't know how Jim can afford to produce his labor of love, as I know that lavish full color productions are extraordinarily expensive. But then again, I don't know how I can afford to do THIS magazine either! (If you're crazy enough, I guess you will find a way!) All I know is that I'm thankful Jim IS doing it, and I hope he continues for years to come. I know I will look forward to every great issue! ●

— *Dan Zimmer*

For more information on Images, *visit:* www.bpib.com

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EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

American Beauties: Drawings from the Golden Age of Illustration

June 26 – September 28, 2002
Swann Gallery, Thomas Jefferson Building, Library of Congress

Works by Charles Dana Gibson, Coles Phillips, Wladyslaw Benda, Nell Brinkley, John Held, Jr., Ethel Plummer, Russell Patterson, Georges Lepape, Harrison Fisher, Howard Chandler Christy, Frederic Gruger and more will be represented in this exhibition highlighting seventeen original drawings selected from outstanding recent acquisitions. The show will be supplemented with premier examples of graphic art from the Library's Cabinet of American Illustration and the Swann Collection of Caricature and Cartoon. An illustrated brochure printed in color with full checklist will be available to visitors.

For more information visit the Foundation's web site: http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/swannhome.html or email: swann@loc.gov. For additional information, contact Martha Kennedy at (202) 707-9115.

John Held, Jr. and the Jazz Age

May 6, 2002–September 8, 2002
The Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge

"John Held, Jr. and the Jazz Age" will examine Held's artistic evolution and the process of American cultural change, through original drawings and paintings, sculpture, artifacts, and archival photographs. At The Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge, Route 183, Stockbridge MA 01262.

For more information, call: 1-413-298-4100

Toast of the Town: Norman Rockwell and the Artists of New Rochelle

May 18, 2002–October 27, 2002
The Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge

The art of Norman Rockwell evolved when he immersed himself in the vibrant New Rochelle artistic community, which offered both significant cultural connections and a sense of country life. Explore Rockwell's life and art during his New Rochelle years by placing his work within the context of such colleagues as J.C. and Frank Leyendecker, Coles Phillips, Walter Beach Humphrey, Claire Briggs, Clyde Forsythe, Frederick Remington, Worth Brehem, Edward Penfield, and others.

For more information, call: 1-413-298-4100

N.C. Wyeth Arrives in Wilmington

September 7, 2002–November 24, 2002
The Brandywine River Museum

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Wyeth's arrival in Wilmington, this exhibition examines the business and technology of illustration at the turn of the last century and features the work of the most popular illustrators of that time. At the Brandywine River Museum, U.S. Route 1 and PA Route 100, Chadds Ford, PA 19317.

For more information, call: 1-610-388-2700

The Art and Politics of Arthur Szyk

April 10 - October 14, 2002
The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Lower Level

During the first half of the 20th century, Polish-born Jewish artist Arthur Szyk raised his pen against antisemitism and Nazi tyranny. Through his artwork, Szyk exposed the persecution of Europe's Jews and pushed for international intervention to end the Holocaust. He began his career as a gifted book illustrator and illuminator, but turned to the more accessible art form of political cartooning after the Nazi invasion of his native Poland in 1939. Upon moving to the U.S. in 1940, he became one of the most influential World War II artists in America, employing his political cartoons to win support for the Allied cause. The exhibit will feature 145 original pieces of Szyk's work during the course of the show. At the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington, DC 20024-2126.

For more information, call: 1-202-488-0400

A Slice of Americana: The Life and Times of Eugene Iverd

September 18 - November 10, 2002
The American Swedish Institute

This exhibit explores the life and times of American illustrator Eugene Iverd. Iverd came onto the scene during the late 1920s during the "Golden Age of American Illustration." His cover illustrations for *The Saturday Evening Post* and other publications reflect the idyllic aspects of life in America following World War I. During his short career Iverd produced 54 magazine covers, 55 paintings for advertisements and hundreds of paintings for family and friends. The exhibit will include original artworks, sketches, paintings and magazine covers courtesy of the family of Eugene Iverd. The American Swedish Institute is at 2600 Park Ave. in Minneapolis.

For more information, call: 1-612-871-4907.

Do you know of any **Exhibitions or Events** *that we should include in this section? If you do, please contact us so that we may include the listing.* ●

In The Next Issue...

ALBERT STAEHLE

FRANK FRAZETTA

NELL BRINKLEY

Roy G. Krenkel by R. Cochran, R. Garrison and D. Burton
Nell Brinkley by Trina Robbins
Albert Staehle by Dr. Donald Stoltz
The Color Sketches of Frank Frazetta by Dr. David Winiewicz
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GIL ELVGREN
(1914-1980)
"Skirting The Issue"
Oil on Canvas, 30 x 24
Signed, Lower Left

Published 1969 by Brown & Bigelow. Calendar print, deck of playing cards, note pad, ink blotter, and match- book cover. Reproduced page 145, figure 344. Gil Elvgren - All His Glamorous American Pin-Ups by Charles G. Martignette and Louis K. Meisel, Taschen, 1999.

ALBERTO VARGAS (1896-1983)
"Hollywood Dream Girl"
Watercolor & Airbrush on Board, 20 x 30
Signed 'Varga' Lower Right, Circa 1945-1955

Transitional Esquire - Playboy era period. Calendar, magazine cover, & centerfold feature subject.

HADDON H. SUNDBLOM
(1899-1976)
"The Pause That Refreshes"
Oil on Canvas, 60 x 50
Signed, Lower Left
Circa 1950-1960

Calendar art, centerfold, advertising specialty subject.

HAROLD W. McCAULEY
(1913-1983)
"The Alien & Miss America"
Oil on Canvas, 30 x 21
Signed, Lower Right

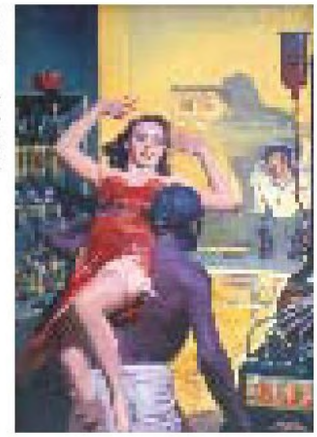
Published front cover Amazing Stories pulp magazine August, 1942.

GEORGE PETTY (1894-1975)
"All American Beauty"
Watercolor & Airbrush on Board, 10 x 22
Signed, Upper Left

Published by True magazine (Fawcett) as a unique 3-page centerfold in December, 1946.

H. J. WARD
(1909-1945)
"The Showgirl Laboratory Experiment"
Oil on Canvas, 30 x 21
Signed, Lower Right

Published front cover Spicy Mystery Stories pulp magazine February, 1940.



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EARL K. BERGEY
(1901-1952)
"Universal Beauty Queen"
Oil on Canvas, 21 x 18
Signed, Lower Left

Published front cover Thrilling Wonder Stories, June, 1951.

PAUL STAHR (1883-1953)
"The Pirate of Wall Street '
Oil on Canvas, 24 x 22
Signed, Lower Right

Published front cover Argosy magazine, May 16, 1931.

GEORGE ROZEN
(1895-1974)
"The Shadow Knows!"
Oil on Canvas, 22.5 x 21.25
Signed, Lower Left

Front cover of The Shadow pulp magazine published March, 1929 by Street & Smith, N.Y.

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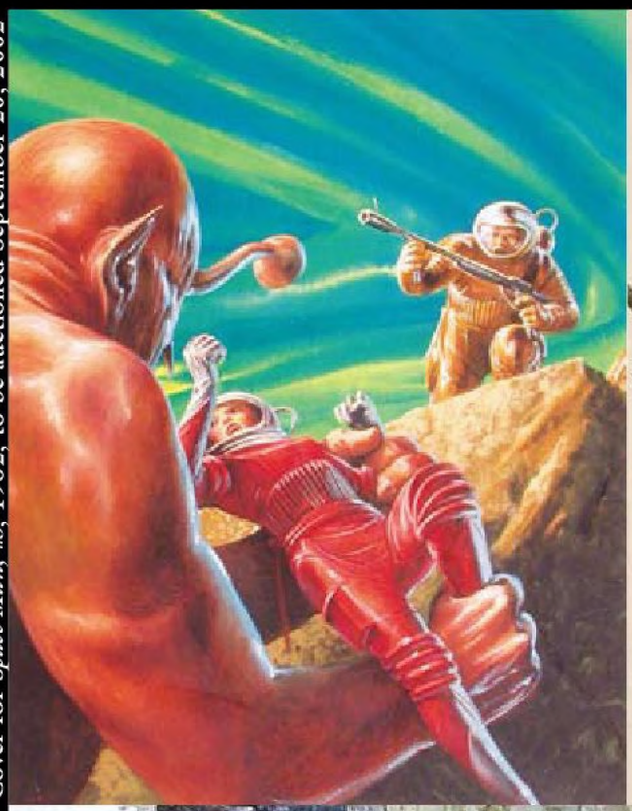
P.O. BOX 293, Hallandale Beach, Florida, 33008 USA Telephone: (954) 454-3474

Author of *The Great American Pin-Up* published worldwide by Benedikt Taschen Verlag, October 1996.
Author of *Gil Elvgren - All His Glamorous American Pin-Ups* published by Benedikt Taschen Verlag, December 1999.

The Fine Art of Illustration



Cover for *Space Man*, #3, 1962, to be auctioned September 20, 2002

J. C. Leyendecker, Arrow Collar Man "sketch", available for direct sale

Dean Cornwell, from "The Exquisite Perdita", to be auctioned November 9, 2002

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